

**Hindi Film Songs and Musical Life in Tamale, Northern Ghana,
1957-Present**

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Declaration of Authorship

I, Katherine Young, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented therein is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, it is clearly stated.

Signed:

Date: 4 February, 2019

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Abstract

This thesis charts the arrival, reception, and adaptation of Hindi film songs in Tamale, northern Ghana throughout the post-colonial period. As a colonial trading hub and administrative capital for the northern region, Tamale drew diffuse communities together into new, urban publics during the late colonial period. Cinema halls were new sites of public leisure in the city, encouraging diverse communities to engage with foreign circulating media collectively. When audiences left the cinema halls in Tamale, songs from their favourite Hindi films moved with them, traversing the city and entering into quotidian spaces of daily life. Following Karin Barber's (1997) exploration of audiences as performers, I detail the ways in which audiences experienced and adapted foreign film songs dependent on faith, gender, class, linguistic background, and age. Songs from the cinema hall found new life as religious praise songs in Islamic schools, lullabies in the home, and in local Dagbani films. By layering foreign film songs onto existing musical forms, audience adaptations illuminate the use and role of music in everyday life. Their adaptations also challenge rigid boundaries of producer and consumer, and complicate bounded notions of musical genre. Engaging with Tejaswini Niranjana's notion of a *lingua musica*, I show how Tamale's growing urban communities fashioned distinctive and multiple subjectivities through the transnational mediated music they shared (2018, 261). A focus on music via the cinema hall thus cultivates a different kind of social "development" history in northern Ghana, one that reveals extended histories of urbanisation, migration, electrification, and transnational networks of musical exchange in an emerging postcolonial context. To do so, this project uses a mixture of archival and ethnographic methods, and draws on literature from a range of disciplines, including postcolonial African histories, cultural geography, ethnomusicology, cinema and media studies, and media anthropology.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AOF: Afrique Occidentale Française

BM: Basel Mission

CPP: Convention People's Party

GBC: Ghana Broadcasting Corporation

GFIC: Ghana Film Industry Corporation

PNDC: Provisional National Defence Council

PRAAD: Public Records and Archives Administration Department

SOAS: School of Oriental and African Studies

UK: United Kingdom

USA: United States of America

USSR: The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

WWI: The First World War

WWII: The Second World War

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Chapter One: Introduction

In the city of Tamale, Northern Ghana, cinemas arrived with Independence in 1957. Situated in the heart of a growing urban centre, the cinema drew large and disparate urban populations together in what was one of the most popular leisure activities at that time. At the cinema hall, Tamale's inhabitants could watch the latest Hollywood and Hindi films, as well as the occasional Egyptian film or Italian "Spaghetti Western" film.¹ Hindi films were particularly popular in town: the language barrier did not seem to matter, as stories embedded within the films were strikingly familiar, depicting themes of cultural, social, and economic change in postcolonial urban life. A three-hour show with musical segments throughout, Hindi films were better value than Hollywood films, and gave youth songs and dances they could take away and perform amongst friends in the days that followed.

This thesis is concerned with the different ways that Hindi film songs circulated and were adapted in Tamale from their arrival in the late 1950s to the present day. Unlike traditional drumming in Dagbon, that was reserved for hereditary musicians (*lunsi*) alone, Hindi films from the cinema halls were adopted and adapted by a diverse community of urban dwellers, taken up in a variety of contexts: street musicians performed their favourite melodies from films like *Albela* (1951) and *Saqi* (1952) around town, while religious leaders integrated these melodies into praise performances at Islamic schools.² In subsequent years, Hindi film songs were circulated independent of the cinema hall as well, through the radio and via gramophone records. This meant that married women, who were more closely tied to domestic labour, could sing Hindi film songs while doing chores and to lull their children to sleep. Over time, Hindi film songs changed in form, language, and function through their many subsequent adaptations in Tamale, dependent on the political, economic, religious, and intergenerational experience of the performer.

As historical sources, songs reveal a great deal about the diverse social environments in which they circulate (Gilbert 2005, 119). How people receive and engage with songs, what they keep intact and what they change, and when and where

¹ While Hindi films have been referred to collectively as Bollywood since 1990, because the films I am concerned with in this research project were nearly all produced prior to 1990, I refer to these films as Hindi films, and to the music as Hindi film songs.

² The people of Dagbon are referred to in academic literature as both Dagomba or Dagbamba. I will be using Dagbamba throughout. The majority language spoken in Dagbon is Dagbani, which is from the Gur branch of the Niger-Congo languages.

they perform particular songs offers insights into urban postcolonial histories that are otherwise absent from official discourse and national archives. Popular songs from cinema halls are particularly useful when exploring postcolonial social histories. Firstly, given that sound films arrived to cinema halls in Ghana in the late 1940s and to Tamale in the mid-1950s, these songs are temporally bound to the postcolonial experience. This is especially true of Hindi films, that grew to their height of international popularity between the 1950s and 1980s, overlapping with the post-colonial period in West Africa. Secondly, as film songs circulate in multiple mediated forms, they help to make sense of the interconnectivity of technological, social, and musical change, revealing the ways that musicians and non-musicians alike experience and make use of mediated music in their day to day lives (Born 2005, 9 and 22; Gilbert 2005, 119; Prior 2018, 15).

In this thesis, I detail the ways in which film music from the cinema hall became part of everyday music making practices in a range of contexts across a postcolonial West African city. Rather than conceiving media as an altogether hegemonic force, I explore audience reception and their creative engagements with film songs in their daily lives. Media scholar Nick Couldry writes that media power:

is not a binary relation of domination between ‘large’ and ‘small’ actors, with ‘large actors’ (the media) having the automatic ability to dominate ‘small actors’ (audience members) simply because of their ‘size’. Media power is reproduced through the details of what social actors (including audience members) do and say...surely, what is distinctive about modern media is...their ability to have effects simultaneously across a large territory, transcending...the scale of local interactions (2002, 4-5).

Throughout this work, I am interested in mediated music’s distinctive ability to transcend space in the city. By following the movement of this music throughout the postcolonial urban space, one meets a variety of social spheres and individuals who encountered and creatively adapted Hindi film songs in their own way. As such, Hindi film music’s circulation and reception reveals a multiplicity of histories rather than one linear story (Lefebvre 1991, 86; Massey 2005, 13). In each chapter, the way that Hindi film music has been received, interpreted, and repurposed tells us a great deal about religious, gendered, and generational experiences of music and social life in the city. In other words, the study of reception is also a process of tracing “the ‘social life of sounds’ through their several states ever more attentively” (Born and Hesmondhalgh 2000, 46). At the same time, I show how individuals traverse these social spaces throughout their lives, conceiving of lives as composed of “a number of forms of social

arenas which have their own distinct patterns of social relations” (Korczynski, Robertson, and Pickering 2013, 6).

Various historians have noted the usefulness of music as historical source, especially in European perspectives. This is true of Shirli Gilbert’s (2005) exploration of popular melodies as historical source in the study of prison communities during the Holocaust. This approach is similarly employed in Rebecca Wagner-Oettinger’s (2001) work on melodies as propaganda during the German reformation. Perhaps the most illuminating example of this approach is Christopher Marsh’s history of the song “Fortune my Foe”, a well-known song throughout England and the Netherlands between 1560 and the eighteenth century. This song not only travelled across geographic regions, but also moved between social strata, and shifted in function over time as well, becoming associated with love, death, and faith at different points in time.³ Because the song was accessible to many, the melody served multiple purposes in marketplaces, alehouses, and aristocratic homes. It took on many functions, from public execution songs, to religious songs, to love songs (2016, 316-323). Through a historical lens, Marsh uses a musical thread (in this case a melody) to write a rich and more interconnected history of social life, tying together temporally, spatially, and socially diverse subjects.

In her writing on the history of popular culture in Africa, Karin Barber notes how scholars of African performance, art, and culture must engage with the “porousness of cultural boundaries” and the “repurposing of genres over time” (2018, 9). She notes how creative work (including images, sounds, movement, or words) have the “potential to be detached from the here and now and be recreated, repeated, or recontextualised in another time and place” (*ibid*, 13). For Barber, the act of performing creative work also suspends the work, as it no longer belongs wholly to the performer, but rather exists in a state of perpetual potential, in which “each reinterpretation or recontextualization ‘completes’ the work in a different way”, dependent on the time, place, and experiences of the performer and the audience (*ibid*). In each chapter, I follow the many ways that Hindi film songs have been explored, performed, and “completed” in different ways, revealing a multiplicity of social histories along the way.

³ Marsh offers multiple reasons why the song gained such popularity throughout both countries: the melody was repetitive, singable, and uncomplicated, while its scale pattern was sober, modest and godly.

Some ethnomusicologists have similarly regarded music as a tool for historical inquiry. In Ruth Finnegan's historical exploration of music in Fiji, she considers music as a practice that lives and changes "in and through the actions of countless individuals and groups, whether staying or travelling, with their sonic memories, their senses, and their bodies" (2011, 147). Drawing on the work of Wilson Harris, Tina Ramnarine also discusses the arts as living and processual; rather than "products of bounded, static, ahistorical cultures", art continues to undergo change in new cultural, social, and political environments that in themselves change over time (2011, 150). Similarly, in his work on the history of Hawaiian music, James Revell Carr (2014) follows Hawaiian music as it moves through maritime commerce aboard ships in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. By following music as it circulated amongst Hawaiian, Euro-American, and African American sailors traversing broad and diverse trade networks, Revell Carr reveals the plasticity of music as it is continually encountered in new social situations and cultural contexts. He details the "constellation" of musical experiences and interactions between these transient sailors and traders.

In the realm of African history, many social historians have explored the performative arts as a lens through which to explore everyday life in colonial and post-colonial Africa (Cole 2001, 3). These social historians link themes, aesthetics, and stories embedded within music, dance, art, literature, and theatre performances to larger social, political, aesthetic, and economic processes, consulting a range of archival and ethnographic sources in the process. As such, my writing draws upon a growing body of literature concerned with histories of art, dance, film, gossip, music, and theatre on the continent, including the work of Karin Barber (1997a; 1997 b; 2003; 2007; 2018), Catherine Cole (2001), John Collins (2005a; 1989), Johannes Fabian (1996; 1998), Carmela Garritano (2013), Andrew Ivaska (2011), Brian Larkin (2008), Phyllis M. Martin (2002), Stephanie Newell (2002), and Luise White (2009).⁴ Like other postcolonial urban histories, such as Terence Ranger's *Bulawayo Burning: The Social History of a Southern African City, 1893-1960* (2010) and Tejaswini Niranjana's (2018) work on the "lingua musica" in Bombay, Tamale's postcolonial social history requires the detailing of societies continually in the making, who experienced, negotiated, and

⁴ In working to define the "popular" in African popular culture, Johannes Fabian (1978; 1996) and Karin Barber (2018, 7-9) note how the term commonly refers to contemporary, urban, the everyday, and participatory practices, especially those that challenge notions of "pure", "high brow" culture as well as "traditional" culture and folklore (Barber 2018, 7; Fabian 1978, 315; 1996, 2-3). However, both also make clear that these distinctions are problematic. Barber writes that the notion of "popular" often works to dehistoricise African cultural expression by placing it firmly in the present without connection to past cultural expressions, while also compartmentalising experiences of cultural expression based on class and social strata alone (2018, 8-9).

adapted the swirl of music, dance, film, and fashion in their everyday environment.⁵ In each instance, these performative art forms are lenses into the postcolonial urban experience, that reveal rich and often unwritten postcolonial histories of everyday life in the city.

Postcolonial urban environments are productive sites for the study of circulating music, as they facilitate the rapid mixing and mingling of people, spaces, ideas, objects, and sounds. Tamale is a particularly interesting example, as it was largely developed during the late colonial period. In 1907, the colonial government chose this area, somewhat arbitrarily, as a trading hub for the North. The colonial government built roads and pathways into this town, a small area on the fringe of the kingdom of Dagbon. These roads connected this small town to larger trade networks in the Southern Gold Coast and into the Sahelian region of West Africa. Through the rise of such infrastructures, Tamale changed from a small cluster of villages of under 1,000 people in 1910, to a rapidly expanding town by the 1930s, to a city of over 200,000 people by the early 2000s, now one of the fastest growing cities in West Africa (Soeters 2012, 3-4). Despite its early growth, British administrators worked to curb the arrival of mediated leisure in Tamale in order to maintain the North's farming communities and its migrant labour force; this is because Northern farmers and labourers supported colonial industries including cocoa farming, gold mining, and the building of railways.⁶ This meant that Tamale was largely cut off from transnationally circulating media until Independence. With the fall of colonial rule in 1957, Ghana's first government, aided by Lebanese and Sindhi business owners, sought to address uneven access to media in the North by building cinema halls and a radio station in Tamale.⁷ Within a matter of years, foreign film and popular music were circulating in this relatively new and rapidly growing Northern town.

⁵ As Bombay was renamed Mumbai in 1995, I refer to any discussion of the city prior to 1995 as Bombay and any discussion of the city post-1995 as Mumbai respectively.

⁶ During the colonial period, Ghana was referred to as the Gold Coast. When I discuss colonial history in this thesis, I refer to Ghana as either the Gold Coast or as colonial Ghana. When discussing postcolonial histories (post-1957), I refer to the region as Ghana.

⁷ This thinking was in line with broader understandings of media and development at the time: by the mid-1950s, access to media was considered a human right, and organisations such as UNESCO encouraged countries to aim for "two cinema seats per one hundred people." For more on this, see: "Statement by Tor Gjesdal, Director of the Department of Mass Communication, UNESCO, to the 18th Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 15 March - 14 April, 1962." William Benton Papers, Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago, Box 393, Folder 11.

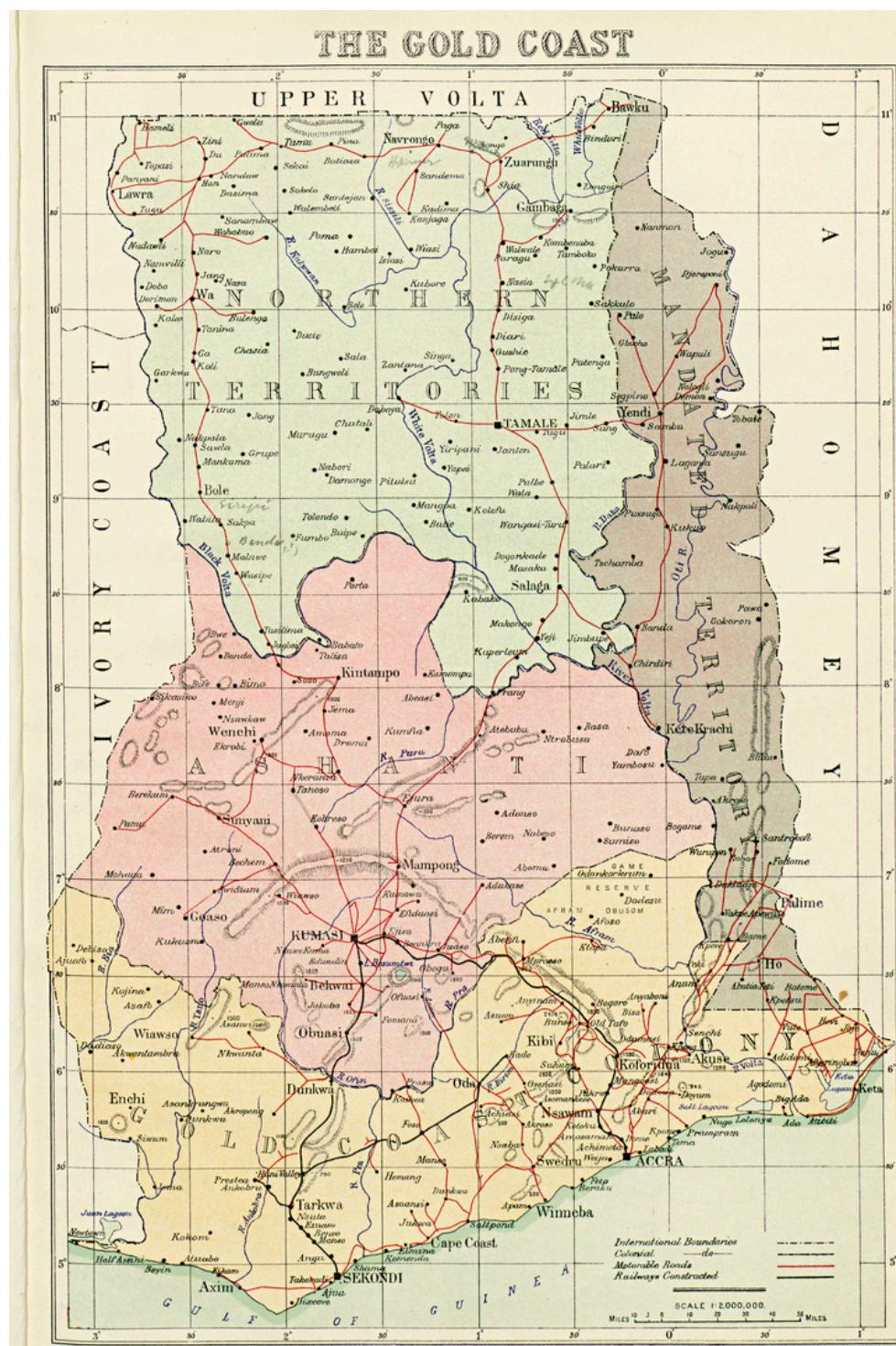


Figure 1 Map of the Gold Coast (1927)

Caption: Above is a map of the Gold Coast divided into four parts: the colony is in yellow, Ashanti in pink, the Northern Territories are in green, and the former German Togoland is in grey. Tamale is located in the South-East portion of the Northern Territories pictured on this map. Note the colonial division of Dagbon, with Tamale in green and Yendi in grey. Map used with permission from the Basel Mission Image Archive.

Michael Veal suggests that if sound functions as history, the remix offers alternative histories, those that reflect crises of certainty, authority, or meaning (2007, 253-255). The uptake of Hindi film song melodies in everyday music-making in Tamale could be conceived as a “remix”, that reveals a great deal about the eclectic and vibrant nature of postcolonial musical life in Northern Ghana. Tamale’s urban residents made their own “remixes” by blending Hindi film song melodies with a range of industrial and commercial materials, inspiring new musical forms that are intimately tied to the postcolonial urban environment itself. For example, during his research in Tamale in the 1970s, ethnomusicologist John Miller Chernoff (1979, 129-130) details how:

[i]n recent years, popular movies from India, musical romantic fantasies have caused a sensation. People remember the songs and set their own words to them. Along with the singing, the melodies provide inspiration for long improvisations on plastic flutes. To fit the music, a young man called Albela, after the swashbuckling hero of some of the films, created a whole style of drumming by using the fingers of one hand on different parts of the bottom of a five-gallon oil drum while using the other hand to play accents on the rim with an empty, small-sized can of evaporated milk. The music is beautiful, and I was impressed by the notion of walking in the streets of Tamale and coming across a musical group with a name like Bombay, gathered to sing Dagomba homilies fitted to Indian movie tunes, their instruments acquired from Western oil companies and food processors and from Asian toy manufacturers.

This example sheds light on the array of foreign industrial and cultural products swirling throughout Tamale at that time, that were subsequently stitched together by creative youth in the city. Of course, the foreign music, films, instruments, and industrial materials circulating in the town were subject to broader capitalist flows, established by colonial networks of trade, and facilitated through inter- and intra-colonial migrants, business owners, bankers, traders, and governmental agents, who made decisions based on what was available, what they deemed appropriate, and what they thought might be financially lucrative. However, the ways in which youth took up foreign circulating music in their own performative practices – when singing, playing instruments, dancing, and fashioning oneself – is significant to a much broader understanding of the urban subjectivities of youth in Tamale, and further indicative of their own postcolonial experience. As Homi Bhabha suggests, hybridity emerges in moments of historical transformation, reflecting shifting forces and fixities (Bhabha 2012, 5 and 159-160). The ways that Hindi film songs were used in everyday, urban, postcolonial life subvert ideas of difference implicated in the rhetoric of British colonial rule, and resist constructions of sameness (or “Ghanaianess”) promoted by postcolonial governments, detailed in the following chapter. Like Janice Radway (1988,

366), I take seriously “the habits and practices of everyday life as they are actively, discontinuously, even contradictorily pieced together by historical subjects themselves as they move nomadically via disparate associations and relations through day-to-day existence”.

Theoretical Frames

Throughout my research, I have embraced the messiness of historical inquiry, engaging with the perspectives and experiences of those I spoke with in Tamale, with the letters and notes left in archival boxes, and with the perspectives and frameworks offered by scholars in a range of fields, including Anthropology, Film, Geography, History, Media, and Music. I have been attentive to the dialogic relationship between these varying disciplinary perspectives, that in themselves draw on particular theoretical frames, the most useful to my project being postcolonial, postmodern, and feminist perspectives. I have found that engaging with diverse interdisciplinary perspectives adds a richness and depth to postcolonial urban research.

Throughout the thesis, I explore reasons why individuals incorporated mediated music in their daily lives. To do so, I engage with Tia DeNora’s writing on music as a technology of the self, where music is used “as an ordering device at the personal level - for creating, enhancing, sustaining and changing subjective, cognitive, bodily and self-conceptual states” (2000, 49).⁸ I also draw on Paul Connerton’s (1989) terms “inscribed” and “incorporating” to describe different engagements with performed and mediated music. Connerton examines mnemonic practices in relation to the body, regarding “incorporating practices” as an ongoing relationship between sounds and humans that are open to change over time, while “inscribed practices” refers to mediated musical recordings, that trap the voice “long after the human organism has stopped informing” (1989, 72). I also engage with Thomas Turino’s (2008) work on participatory practices throughout. For Turino, participatory music making occurs when there is no singular performer but rather a myriad of participants, whose main goal for music making is to encourage further participation. DeNora, Connerton, and Turino’s respective works are particularly useful in Chapter Five, when Hindi film songs were used for group domestic labour, and Chapter Six, when Hindi film songs were used to encouraged youth participation in the Islamic school *mawlid*

⁸ My writing also aligns with Christopher Small’s (1998) concept of *musicking*, where “music” comprises the entire experience – including those who perform, take part in, listen to, or to engage with music – revealing the active ways in which humans relate to the world around them through music and sound.

performances. In these chapters, Hindi film song adaptations are experienced and performed by the listeners themselves, adapted to fit within their own musical performances and activities.

While I differentiate between people's engagements with recorded music and live performance practices in day to day life, I am also attentive to the fluid nature of music as it continually traverses these "inscribed" and "incorporated" labels. In each chapter, I follow Hindi film song melodies as they take new shape in various recorded and performative forms over time. In some instances, such as in Chapter Five and Six, people initially experience Hindi film songs in their recorded form via the cinema and on gramophone records, and later incorporate these melodies into their own performative musical practices across daily life. In Chapter Seven, I show how Hindi film song melodies were subsequently brought back into their mediated form in the 1990s, when Dagbani filmmakers and singers combined Hindi film song melodies with Dagbani lyrics in the studio, producing their own Dagbani film songs. Dagbani film songs subsequently circulated throughout the city via the radio and on cassettes, so that recorded Hindi film songs were being re-experienced in an altogether different "inscribed" and mediated form. In her work on mediated music, Georgina Born provides a useful frame for understanding music's mediation in relation to historical change, a process she terms musical assemblages, a constellation of music's multiple mediations over time (2005, 13).⁹ Rather than viewing mediated music as a final product, she conceives of recorded music as: "never singular, but always a multiplicity; it exists only in and through its multiple and changing mediations, in the guise of such assemblages" (Born 2010, 87-88). As Hindi film melodies continue to circulate in their varied original recorded form, as Dagbani film tracks, and in various everyday performance practices, they remain open to "repeated re-creation", undergoing a process of "recurrent decomposition, composition and re-composition by a series of creative agents" that Born refers to as relayed creativity (2005, 26).

Music's ability to flow in and out of mediated and non-mediated forms over time is reflected in generational experiences of music, a topic I engage with throughout

⁹ Assemblages are an idea that developed out of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's work *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1980). Deleuze and Guattari use the term "rhizome" to describe ideas, objects, and people as they move along myriad paths, and assemblages are the points where these many interconnected lines align and accrete (Deleuze and Guattari 1980; McFarlane 2011, 652). As urban geographer Colin McFarlane explains, an assemblage "does not separate out the cultural, material, political, economic, and ecological, but seeks to attend to why and how multiple bits and pieces accrete and align over time" (2011, 652).

the thesis. When I explore the movement of music across generations, I discuss these processes in relation to Turino's (2008) notion of cultural cohorts and formations, where the widespread popularity of Hindi film songs within a particular generational cohort spill over into a broader cultural formation for subsequent generations, following its use in various incorporated and participatory musical practices in daily life. When discussing the ways that music is experienced by subsequent generations, I use Turino's idea of semantic snowballing to frame my thinking. With semantic snowballing, musical signs have become so layered that when new generations call upon these signs, they are often referring to a more recent adaptation than the original song itself (2000, 175-176; 2008, 146). This is no more evident than in Chapter Seven, where the advent of video and audio recording technologies in Tamale saw the rise of Dagbani film songs, that draw on Hindi film melodies. This has made it so that children today incorporate Dagbani film song melodies into their own musical practices, often without an awareness of the original Hindi film song melody.

As musical melodies lack "denotative 'back-up'", their meanings are never fixed, and the original source of a melody will fade eventually, given music's capacity to become naturalised over time (Born and Hesmondhalgh 2000, 45-46). In light of this, Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh suggest that we must pursue the history of musical change, tracing "the social life of sounds" over time (*ibid*). Chapters Five, Six, and Seven explore such musical change, as Hindi film song melodies are adapted in the domestic sphere, in religious schools, and in the music studio in Tamale. In each case, I explore the reasons why performers draw upon these film melodies. To do so, I draw upon Turino's exploration of Peircean semiotics to frame such discussions (1999; 2008). Given that these film song melodies co-occur in multiple spheres over time in Tamale, they are musical signs that function indexically, calling into the mind of the listener previous experiences of that same melody (1999, 234-235). At other times, these musical signs are experienced as icons, heard as resembling and sounding like other kinds of music one has heard elsewhere in the past (*ibid*, 234). For example, in Chapter Five, I explore the indexicality of Hindi film songs as they become related to experiences of motherhood and child-directed music in the home for subsequent generations of youth. In Chapter Six, I explore the iconicity of Hindi film songs in terms of their perceived resemblances to music and culture of the Arab world for Tamale's Tijani religious scholars. In Chapter Seven, Hindi film song melodies are employed by Dagbani playback singers in order to directly index the emotional distress of the film character. Singers choose Hindi film songs dealing with loss and heartbreak,

that feature particular tones, modes, melodies, breathiness, and a shaky vocal style that stand to index emotional vulnerability for Tamale's listeners, mirroring the sounds of tears and sobs. In this case, the performers' voices function as *dicent*-indices, where the musical performance is "taken literally as emotional expression", making the film character's vulnerability appear real to the listener (Turino 1999, 229-231, 239).

Thesis Outline

In combination, Chapters One, Two, and Three foreground the research with an introduction, review of available literature, and an exploration of methodology respectively. Chapter Two explores the ways in which music circulates, including how music is received in new environments, and how it is adapted over time. I outline key literature concerning transnationally circulating music, such as bodies of work on global hip hop and jazz movements, and an in depth exploration of the global circulation and reception of Hindi film songs. I consider political and technological factors that allowed some music to circulate to the exclusion of others in the post-colonial period, such as state national culture building projects and the ways that "big/old" media shaped who could produce and circulate recorded music and film. Chapter Three explores the "messiness" of postcolonial African urban histories, and outlines my archival methods for research on postcolonial urban life, piecing together disparate oral accounts, archival notes, and memoirs along with sound recordings and photographs (White 2015, 313). Given the timeframe of this project (from 1957-present), my methods have been mixed, combining archival work in Ghana, England, and Scotland with substantial ethnographic research in Tamale. This chapter outlines my work with archival documents, as well as my varied ethnographic experiences, including my approach to interviews and participant observation.

Chapter Four charts a public history of Tamale, exploring its urban development in the late colonial and early post-colonial period. In order to reach Tamale, Hindi film songs traversed extended trade networks forged by Lebanese, Syrian, and Sindhi business owners. These businessmen built cinemas in cities across West Africa, and brought the newest films from India to their cinemas screens. Such trade flows were made possible in Tamale through the building of the Great North Road and subsequent feeder roads beginning in the 1910s and 1920s. Roads connected Tamale to broader trade networks to the South and North of the city, encouraging all kinds of people to move there. These roads also made it possible for Northerners to travel South each year

to take part in migrant wage labour. Upon return home, Northern migrants brought newly earned wages with them that fed into Tamale's urban economy. They also brought new kinds of technology into the city, such as gramophones and accompanying music records. In charting Tamale's urbanisation, I also explore moments of tension and friction that further shaped Tamale's development, such as local protests with regards to slum clearance programmes enacted to "modernise" Tamale, or following the alien's compliance order, that saw thousands of migrants forced to leave Ghana en masse. Throughout, I draw on the work of scholars who conceive of urban space as a product of interrelations, as well as a site of social complexity and multiplicity, such as Henri Lefebvre (1991) and Doreen Massey (2005).

Chapters Five, Six, and Seven provide three different examples of how Hindi film songs found their way into musical life in Tamale. In Chapter Five, I detail how married women's restrictions from public leisure activities, along with the rise of gramophone technologies in the home in the 1950s, brought Hindi film songs into domestic musical practices. Mothers and domestic labourers used Hindi film songs as a way to escape boredom and become more efficient in their work, and also sang these songs to their children as lullabies to help calm them and lull them to sleep. The chapter raises interesting questions about how gendered labour practices shaped experiences of Hindi film songs in the city. For example, women's ongoing chores and domestic labour meant that they more often listened to Hindi film songs on gramophone (and later cassette) while working, whereas men more commonly listened to songs while watching a film. It further lends insight into how intergenerational exchange of music creates new indices, so that subsequent generations of children in the late post-colonial period first heard Hindi film songs as their "mother's songs" rather than songs from the cinema hall. For many contemporary youth, Hindi film song melodies are strongly associated with women in the domestic sphere.

In Chapter Six, I explore the introduction of Hindi film songs into the Tijaniyya (Sufi) Islamic school *mawlid* celebrations in Tamale beginning in the 1960s. At this time, school leaders set Arabic texts to Hindi film song melodies that children sang to honour the Prophet during the third month of the Islamic calendar each year. Tijaniyya school teachers integrated Hindi film songs into the *mawlid* in order to draw youth back to the Tijaniyya faith during a period of intra-religious tension, relying on the indexical nature of Hindi film songs that were very popular in the city at that time. The praise songs taught in Tamale's school *mawlid* practices thus offer a lens through which to

explore histories of religious conflict and change in early post-colonial Tamale. I also explore the importance of foreign media for Muslim communities in post-colonial Tamale, a region where very little Arabic language mediated music circulated at that time. I show how Hindi film songs functioned as icons, linked to a broader Islamic world for Tijaniyya school teachers, who heard these film songs as sounding “just like Arab music”.

Chapter Seven details the use of Hindi film song melodies in Dagbani film songs.¹⁰ With the rise of new recording equipment in the early 1990s, including boom boxes and video recorders, youth began to create music for a newly emerging Dagbani film industry. To do so, they layered Dagbani lyrics onto Hindi film song melodies, exploring issues of everyday life pertinent to Tamale’s urban youth. Dagbani film songs began to circulate in recorded form, both in Dagbani films, but also on Dagbani film soundtrack compilation cassettes and later CDs, played in markets, on taxis, and on the radio. As such, this chapter explores the major changes that took place with the rise of “small media” and digital recording equipment, as Dagbani film music became easily accessible and widespread, scattering “from any point of creation and departure to any number of points of destination” (Born 2005, 25). Through their adaptations in local films, these melodies reflect experiences of urbanity, poverty, and religious change in contemporary Tamale. Tamale’s filmmakers and playback singers use older Hindi film song melodies in Dagbani film songs for their ability to evoke emotion in listeners, supporting Dagbani lyrics that grapple with experiences of hopelessness, disconnect from God, and tensions between rural and urban life in Northern Ghana.

In this thesis, I have chosen to focus more closely on three ways that Hindi film songs are used in Tamale: in the home as lullabies and work songs, in the *mawlid* schools as praise songs, and in the making of Dagbani film soundtracks. There are other ways that Hindi film songs have been used in Tamale’s past and present musical scenes. Especially in the early post-colonial period, Hindi film songs were used in a range of street performances, such as Albela’s performances outside of the cinema (mentioned in Chernoff’s recollection above). There were also spontaneous songs sung amongst groups of men in their homes for fun that used Hindi film song melodies, as is evidenced in some of the recordings on the accompanying cassette to Chernoff’s book *Representing African Music* (1979). Other musicians used Hindi film song melodies to

¹⁰ These films are commonly termed “Dagbani language films” or “Dagbani films” for short, and thus, those involved in making these films are part of the “Dagbani film industry” rather than the Dagbamba film industry.

sing a kind of apala music, used to wake worshippers up in the morning after fasting during Ramadan.¹¹ Hindi film song melodies were found in Simpa music, a kind of recreational youth music popular in Tamale that emerged in the mid-1930s and became increasingly popular in the 1970s and 1980s.¹² Some Simpa groups were exclusively focussed on Hindi film songs, with group names including Bombay Simpa and Delhi Hai Indian Group, who performed Hindi film songs at Simpa competitions up until the coup in the late 1970s. While I followed these threads of musical circulation and adaptation, it was difficult to collect material for a substantial chapter, given that many of the musicians involved have since passed away.

In the realm of Hindi film songs and media, it was possible to explore the development of Hindi film fan clubs in Tamale, as there are around five different fan clubs in the region, all connected to radio stations who organise weekly radio shows.¹³ I spent much time with these fan clubs, though ultimately decided not to focus on these groups, as my thesis became more concerned with musical participation and adaptation than with music appreciation in and of itself. That being said, many (though certainly not all) who contributed to the chapter on Hindi film songs in the home belong to these Hindi film fan clubs as well. Finally, it was possible to explore the business of pirating Hindi film song soundtracks for sale in Tamale. This would include an exploration of those who curate these soundtracks, those who design and print them, and how they are sold in the market in Tamale. Having spent time at the Hindi film stalls in Tamale's central market, I know that sellers are expected to have an impressive knowledge of Hindi film songs in order to sell a product: sellers are expected to be able to recognise a song and its related film just by hearing the melody. Though I spent time with video sellers and marketers, issues relating to copyright infringement meant that there were difficulties accessing the information that would have made this a fruitful chapter.

¹¹ Apala is a kind of music that emerged in the 1930s amongst Yoruba people in Western Nigeria. Singers move throughout town performing on drums and rattles in order to wake up fasting worshippers during the month of Ramadan. As there was a large diasporic community of Yoruba people living in Tamale prior to their forced exodus in 1969 (Eades 1994), it is possible that Yoruba apala performers influenced Dagbamba musicians in Tamale who took up the practice during Ramadan as well. However, I also noticed a large selection of apala records in the GBC Gramophone library, and it is possible that apala music was broadcast to Northerners in Tamale.

¹² Emerging in Dagbon in the inter-war period, Simpa fused Gombe (a musical style originating from the city of Prang in the Brong-Ahafo region) with Amidziro music (originating from Hausa people of Northern Nigeria) (Collins 1985b, 35-36). Simpa is a Dagbani term for Winneba, the port where Highlife music originated (*ibid*). In later decades, Simpa musicians integrated sounds from gramophone records, Akan highlife, European Waltzes and Foxtrots, Brass Band style and also influences from concert party theatres including Axim Trio (*ibid*).

¹³ For other examples of fan clubs and fan cultures organised around radio in the African context, see Peter Tirop Simatei's (2014, 266-274) book chapter "*Heshimu Ukuta: Local-Language Radio and the Performance of Fan Culture in Kenya*" and Gwenda Vander Steene's (2012, 307) discussion of Bollywood music radio programmes in Senegal.

In reviewing the findings of Chapters Four through Seven, Chapter Eight teases out some of the intersections of these varied musical histories. I show how in contemporary Tamale, it is becoming nearly impossible to find the “source” of a Hindi film song melody a child sings in school or a filmmaker sings in the studio. The origins of the melody become irrelevant, as they fade into the musical fabric of urban life in Tamale. Through the movement of these melodies across a variety of mediated and embodied lines, and through a range of social and historical changes, they are part of the musical soundscape of everyday life in Tamale.

Chapter Two: Exploring Hindi Film Song Circulation, Reception, and Change

Beginning in the mid-1950s, Hindi film songs moved beyond India and into many regions throughout the world. This chapter reviews literature concerned with the circulation, reception, and adaptation of Hindi film songs in a range of regional contexts, as well as key themes and concepts relevant to these processes. I have divided this chapter into two main sections: in the first section, I explore academic work on the transnational circulation and movement of music in the twentieth century, reviewing case examples from a variety of genres, including global hip hop and global jazz. In this section, I also consider some of the political and technological factors that both encouraged and impeded the circulation of different kinds of mediated music at different points in time. I then provide an overview of available scholarship concerned with the global circulation of Hindi film songs throughout the colonial and post-colonial periods. In the second section, I explore the ways that Hindi film songs were received and adapted in varying regional contexts. More specifically, I focus on three “main” reasons for the appeal of Hindi film songs abroad, including (1) they appealed to struggling and lower-class urban migrants in post-war cities, (2) they appealed to Muslim communities abroad through their use of Islamicate iconography, and (3) they appealed to urban youth, who collectivised around the gloss and fashion of Hindi films circulating in the cinema halls at that time.

Part One: Music Circulation

How Music Moves

Given its oral and aural nature, music circulates with people as they travel, move between, and migrate to new places. With the rise of maritime trade in the eighteenth century, and the development of subsequent automotive transport technologies in the late-nineteenth century, people were more mobile than ever before (Erlmann 1999, 3; Revell Carr 2014, 2-3). Sailors, colonial agents, missionaries, labourers, travelling theatre groups, migrants, and entertainers moved throughout the world with expediency.¹⁴ Music began to circulate with them, so that songs, instruments, and

¹⁴ Some scholars explore the musical creativity of migrants, who travel in between home and an “elsewhere” on a regular basis. A great example of this is found in the mine cultures of South Africa,

dance styles from disparate regions came into contact, mixing and melding in new and creative ways.

Given the increased mobility of people during this period, historical ethnomusicological work concerned with maritime trade has been particularly productive in the discussion of music circulation. An example of this is found in James Revell Carr's (2014) work on Hawaiian music, that circulated on international ships and in ports throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Ruth Finnegan's recent monograph *Fiji's Music* (2017) details rapid change in musical life on the island of Fiji following an increase in maritime travel, when Indo-Fijians, Tongans, and Europeans arrived on the island. Significant to the West African context are Kru (Kroo) mariners and seamen, who are credited with introducing various guitar traditions (including osibisaaba guitar, accordion music, and palm wine style guitar) across the subcontinent in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Collins 2006, 154; Schmidt 2010, 117). Other travellers who arrived in the Gold Coast by sea include West Indian soldiers who were stationed in Cape Coast to assist the British during the Sangrethi War of 1873 (Collins 2006, 151). These British Caribbean soldiers brought regimental brass bands and Afro-Caribbean music to the Gold Coast (*ibid*). Of course, missionaries also played an integral role in the circulation of Euro-American worship songs in West Africa and throughout the world during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Alongside new kinds of transportation technologies, the advent of written musical notation, and more recently recording technologies, changed the way that music circulates. Through recording technologies, certain kinds of music began to circulate independent of human performance, moving at a much faster pace. For example, the development of music notation in Ancient Greece and early Europe meant that music could be remembered and transmitted across disparate regions. The advent of the printing press in the fifteenth century further encouraged the circulation of notated music, as printed materials such as broadside ballads and church hymns reached everyday people in Europe and beyond. By the 1930s, new recording technologies including sound films, radio, and gramophones similarly facilitated the increased movement of music independent of live performance.

explored in depth in David Coplan's book *In the Time of Cannibals: The Word Music of South Africa's Basotho Migrants* (1994).

Beginning in the 1930s, intra- and inter-colonial merchants and traders circulated popular music records and films throughout the world. In Fiji, the late 1930s saw the arrival of radio and gramophone records that brought Hindi film songs, jazz records, and other Euro-American popular music to the island (Finnegan 2011, 135-140). In Indonesia, the 1930s were a crucial period in which records and radio ushered in Hindi film songs, rumba and tango records, and Malay language popular music to the area (Weintraub 2010, 58). Those living in Tamil Nadu, South India also experienced a “music boom” around this time: all kinds of music flowed through gramophone records, including “opera, comic songs, military band music, marches, waltzes, classical and church music”, commencing what Stephen Hughes terms a “historically unprecedented ‘dissemination of music’” in the region (2002, 445-446). East Africa was also experiencing a swirl of foreign and regionally recorded music by the 1930s, as American, South Asian, and Arabic language records were circulating alongside newly recorded East African music records, produced by a range of major record companies in the area and abroad (Eisenberg 2009, 209 and 2017, 341; Kubik 1981, 91).

In the 1930s, the Gold Coast experienced an influx of foreign music records that circulated alongside West African popular music and local spirituals, recorded by the British Zonophone and HMV companies stationed there (Collins 2011, 162). The record business was extremely influential in West Africa: by the 1930s, the aforementioned companies sold 181,484 shellac records in colonial Ghana alone, and by the early 1930s, West Africa’s two largest record companies had sold 800,000 records across the region, encouraging a variety of other recording companies to travel there as well (*ibid*). Alongside gramophone records, radio reached the Gold Coast in the 1930s, with the first broadcast in July 1935 (Ghartey-Tagoe 2015; Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Periodicals July 1972, 2). However, it was not until after WWII that radio infrastructures expanded significantly in the colony, offering news and music in several languages including Twi, Fante, Ga, Hausa, and Ewe, as well as programmes like Voice of America, featuring American and Caribbean music on air (Plageman 2013, 126-127).

Synchronised dialogue in films (known as “talkies”) arrived to the Gold Coast in 1927. Beginning in the late 1920s and into the 1930s, cinemas featured vaudeville sketches and cowboy films, giving rise to new kinds of musical performances at cinema halls in Accra and Cape Coast (Cole 2001, 73; Collins 2006, 152; Meyer 2015, 41). For

example, the musical group Williams and Marbel imitated the dances from their favourite cowboy and vaudeville pictures, and included them in their comedy sketches, popular songs, and tap dance performances (Cole 2001, 73; Collins 2006, 152). Audiences copied the fashion, dance steps, and performances of Al Jolson, and by the late 1920s, Accra's theatre variety performances combined elements of local and imported music, dance, and stories including the Charleston dance, and performances of Jolson's famed song "Yes We Have No Bananas" (Cole 2001, 73). Ghana's concert party theatre tradition also grew out of the minstrel theatrical conventions of Jolson films, that were viewed in early cinema halls in Ghana's coastal region (*ibid*, 22).¹⁵ Despite its early influence, there were frequent technical difficulties with cinematic sound equipment in the 1930s, and it was not until 1940 that all twelve cinemas in the greater Accra area had functioning sound equipment (McFeely 2015, 25 and 154; Meyer 2015, 41).

The circulation of gramophone records and foreign film music reflect a particular kind of media, that was largely controlled and negotiated by international recording corporations and governments. Throughout the Global South, the circulation of foreign recorded music was interceded by many governments in the early post-colonial years, as newly emerging states worked to build and promote their own national culture through the arts (including music, dance, film, and radio) (Collins 2005a, 21; Counsel 2016, 551-552; Ivaska 2011, 6-7, 17-18 and 37; Kubik 1981, 84; Plageman 2014, 259; Steene 2008, 124; Turino 2008, 142-145). Constructing "national culture" was no simple task for most postcolonial governments. Newly Independent states were comprised of heterogeneous populations, a residual effect of colonial rule, where boundaries had been drawn (often arbitrarily) to include those of differing linguistic, religious, and sociocultural backgrounds (Turino 2008, 144). For example, Nigeria was "cobbled together from around four hundred different ethnicities and language groups" (McCain 2013, 223), while Zimbabwe comprised various semi-autonomous groups within the country (Turino 2008, 144), and Ghana comprised over one hundred groups characterised by cultural and language differences (Levinson 1998, 136; Falola and Salm 2002, 5). Thus, in most regions, "national culture" was carefully constructed through the work of government employees and academics, in partnership

¹⁵ Concert party theatre is a travelling theatre tradition combining drama, music and dance, that emerged in the Gold Coast in the 1920s. Over the decades, actors and performers have drawn on a range of influences, including European influences such as foxtrot and ragtime in the 1920s, and highlife and African popular music beginning in the 1950s. It has been written about most extensively by musicologist John Collins (1994) and Catherine Cole (2001).

with musicians, dancers, filmmakers, and artists. As Homi Bhabha (2012) suggests, these projects of belonging took a great deal of intentional and specific work, similar to earlier colonial projects that sought to construct “tradition” (Chatterjee 2007; Kubik 1981, 85).

In order to develop a sense of “national culture” that could eclipse foreign popular music records and films, many new governments employed radio broadcasters, academics, and government workers to seek out national culture “in the field”. These agents travelled across their respective countries in search of a range of music and dance styles that could be included in their national repertoire. For example, in Ghana, GBC employees actively sought out new kinds of “Ghanaian” music, travelling across the country to collect new music for broadcast in attempts to Africanise the airwaves. One former GBC employee described his experience working with the GBC in the early 1960s, where:

Recordings of traditional music were made by travelling units in the field and subsequently broadcast so that the different regions were able to become familiar with each other’s music. Other recordings were made in specially arranged studio programmes, and Ghana was now beginning to build up a central library of folk music recordings (Bornoff 1963, 61).

In a similar archival note, another GBC employee described travelling around Ghana for nine months with the Radio Ghana music director, recording traditional music for broadcast (Gunderson 2001, 172). Other governments with less time and stricter budgets collected the music of migrant labourers living in major towns and cities (Turino 2008, 142).

Once national culture had been curated, states worked to institutionalise it. For example, music scholar John Collins writes how in Ghana, the first government (the Convention People’s Party or the CPP) “attempted to indigenise their performances and recordings in a self-conscious ideological way” (2005a, 21). The state sought to institutionalise “Ghanaian culture” through the building of the Kumasi Cultural Centre, the commissioning of the Ghana Dance Ensemble, and through country-wide festivals (Collins 2005a, 22-23; McFeely 2015, 179-189). The same governments that worked to construct a national culture also capitalised on the power of media (including music production, radio broadcasting, newspapers, filmmaking, and later television) to support it (for examples see Askew 2002; Collins 2005a, 22-23; Counsel 2016; Ivaska

2011; Kubik 1981, 84-86). Politicians were aware that mass media worked to establish mass indices; they employed mass media to create indices of a shared “national culture”, attempting to connect broad and disparate populations in the process (Turino 2008, 143). For example, following Ghanaian Independence, the government nationalised newspapers and film production, and attempted to establish state-owned cinemas throughout the country, so that they could promote Ghanaian music and film on a mass scale (Anokwa 1998, 10-11; Garritano 2013, 46-48; McFeely 2015, 179-189). In Guinea, the government similarly sought to construct and control national arts via daily newspapers, radio broadcasts, state television, and a state film company (Counsel 2016, 554).

At the same time, there were continual efforts to discourage foreign music consumption. For example, Ghana’s first president Kwame Nkrumah considered foreign popular music to be “an unhealthy music” that was “antithetical to Ghanaian culture”, strongly discouraging foreign music and encouraging youth to listen to Ghanaian music instead (Plageman 2014, 259). Despite such pressures, Ghanaian youth constructed their own ideas of what “modernity” and “modernisation” meant to them (McFeely 2015, 40). As Karin Barber, John Collins, and Alan Ricard suggest, youth were undoubtedly engaging in the music, theatre, and film that they themselves found important and relevant to their own lives (1997, 5). While states were fashioning national identities, urban youth engaged with the music of youth from other parts of the world, participating in “an international cohort of youth who promoted liberation, celebrated consumption, and...combated the depersonalisation that generations of Ghanaians had experienced under colonial rule” (Plageman 2014, 259; see also Ivaska 2011).

Scholarly work concerned with the building of “national cultures” in postcolonial African states aligns with a broader discourse brought forth by postcolonial scholars and historians, whose work has shown that the construction of “traditional culture” is often implicated in broader power politics. For example, in Terence Ranger and Eric Hobsbawm’s edited collection *The Invention of Tradition* (1983), scholars show how a range of traditions that appear to be “old” – including examples in Scotland, Wales, Victorian India and colonial Africa – are often quite recent and have been deliberately manufactured by those in positions of authority (see also Chatterjee 2007). Taussig’s (1993) discussion of mimesis and alterity further underscores how “unchanging” or “authentic” traditions work to establish difference between the coloniser and the

colonised. For example, when three-thousand Chopi and Zulu dancers from Witwatersrand mines were asked to perform for the British Rugby team at the Simmer and Jack Mine in 1896, colonial audiences were disappointed to see “their western dress rather than ‘traditional’ garb”. Three years later, six thousand migrant labourers performed in strict and compulsory “traditional” dress (Harries 1994, 124-125). In colonial Northern Ghana, British administration exaggerated and encouraged “traditional” practices that worked to further the economic goals of colonial administration (Cammaert 2016; Lentz 2006 and 2013). Similar manipulations of tradition are evidenced in the history of chieftaincy in colonial Ghana, whereby chiefs used their “traditional” structures of power (that were partly fabricated during colonial rule) to ensure their political and economic status and access to land while working as colonial intermediaries (Hawkins 2002; Lentz 2006). Such examples bring into question how tradition or cultural fidelity is constructed and framed, who it is encouraged by, and for what purposes.

Early ethnomusicological scholarship in Northern Ghana reflected the ideologies and trajectories of early post-colonial governments, who sought out pristine and traditional forms of music in the field. Much early ethnomusicological work in the region privileged the study of traditional music, with a strong focus on drumming cultures in the region. For example, when ethnomusicological research began in Northern Ghana in the mid-1970s, scholarship was largely focussed on traditional instrumental, singing, and dance cultures, with less focus on urban migrant music or dance (for examples, see Chernoff 1979; Djedje 1985; Locke 1992; Nketia 1963; Wiggins and Kobom 1992).¹⁶ Music scholar Kofi Agawu (1995, 83) writes that many early ethnomusicologists tended to discuss broad, unchanging musical traditions, overlooking the study of canonical artistic works in their own right. As ethnomusicologist Steven Feld further suggests, such work was often concerned with percussion traditions, focussing on rhythmic complexity and technical virtuosity (akin to the notion of the ‘musical genius’ in European classical music traditions), with far less attention paid to the relationship between sound and aesthetic preferences as they linked to social life (1991, 80-81). Though scholars of Northern Ghanaian music focussed on virtuosic traditional drumming practices almost exclusively, from quite early on, urban music and dance had caught the attention of scholars focussing on other regions throughout the subcontinent. With regards to Nigerian popular culture, there

¹⁶ Though Chernoff focusses on drumming traditions, he does make mention of urban musical practices throughout, and even includes some examples of such activities on his accompanying cassette.

were scholars working on various popular music forms from the 1980s, including Christopher Waterman's history of *Jùjú* music (1990) and Karin Barber's work on Yoruba travelling theatre (2003).¹⁷ Kwabena Nketia, Ghana's most renowned ethnomusicologist, wrote about Ghanaian popular music as early as the 1950s (Nketia 1956). John Collins has written extensively on the history of highlife music and concert party theatre music traditions in Ghana's coastal regions (1985a, 1985b, 1989, 1994, 2005a, 2006, 2011). More recently, scholars have explored the rise of hiplife culture and salsa dancing cultures in Ghana's capital, Accra (Osumare 2012; Quayson 2014; Shipley 2012). To date, very little work has explored popular music in Northern Ghana, and the majority of recent music scholarship continues to focus on traditional forms of music-making (see Blankenship 2014; Djedje 2008; Haas 2007 and 2016; Hogan 2011). There are two recent exceptions to this, including Dominik Phyfferoen's (2012) article on hiplife in Tamale, and Mohammed Sheriff Yamusah's (2013) Master's thesis on Tamale's recording industry.

State attempts to control youth's musical tastes began to dissolve with the advent of personal recording devices, such as cassette recording technologies and video cameras, beginning in the late 1970s. These new recording technologies changed who could record and distribute music and film, marking a fundamental shift in both the economy and power politics of mass music and media production and distribution.¹⁸ The changing shape of music production and circulation at this time was first discussed by Roger Wallis and Krister Malm in their book *Big Sounds from Small Peoples: The Music Industry in Small Countries* (1984), that details changes in music production and circulation following the advent of cassette technologies in 1970s Tanzania, Tunisia, Sweden, and Trinidad. They explore the power held by profit-driven international music corporations (who largely monopolised record production), and by governments, who supported and suppressed different kinds of recorded music based on their own policies and regulations (*ibid*, 49-58). They further explore how these larger corporations responded to the rise of tape cassette technology in the 1970s, a kind of "new media" that put the power of music production in the hands of working musicians and the non-elite (*ibid*). Peter Manuel's book *Cassette Culture* (1993) was another major ethnomusicological contribution to the study of home media production. In his

¹⁷ The Nigerian Yoruba popular music genre *Jùjú* combines praise singing and church rhythms with guitar styles of soul and Latin American dance music, as well as melodies from Cowboy films and Indian film songs (Waterman 1990, 2).

¹⁸ This shift contributed to the demise of cinema culture, as by the early 1990s, television sets and cheap videos displaced cinema going as the major leisure activity of the day.

book, Manuel differentiates between “old media” and “new media”, where “old media” refers to those “centralized forms of mass media”, such as state-run media and commercial and corporate recording industries, where mediated music was centrally controlled and passively consumed (*ibid*, 3-4). In contrast, “new media” was a “democratic-participant mass medium”; it made it possible for community members to create their own media, catering to the desires, needs, and tastes of their immediate communities (*ibid*).

This major technological change has also been explored in the work of media anthropologists and film scholars, with concern to the rise of video recorders around the same time. Video recorders made it possible for local artists and entrepreneurs to produce their own popular videos. These homemade videos became increasingly accessible at video centres that popped up throughout urban centres at that time, overpowering state-owned filmmaking corporations (who produced national art cinema), as well as commercial cinema businesses (that screened largely foreign films in larger cinema halls situated in town and city centres) (Garritano 2013, 64-68; Krings 2015, 6-7; Meyer 2015, 8 and 39-40).¹⁹ African popular media such as the Nollywood film industry emerged out of these new video technologies (Haynes 2000; Krings 2015, 6-7).²⁰

The transition between “old/big media” and “new/small media” was a contentious one in the realm of African film scholarship. In the latter half of the twentieth century, many African film scholars studied the work of filmmakers born out of state-run film schools, who produced a form of African art cinema that was quite different in form, narrative structure, and content from the commercial films shown in postcolonial cinema halls, as well as the popular videos made by entrepreneurs beginning with the rise of video technologies in the 1980s. As a result, West African film scholarship was slower to warm to the study of local video industries, a form of grassroots popular culture that often borrowed narrative material and structure from foreign commercial films popular at that time. As film scholar Carmela Garritano

¹⁹ While media scholarship often differentiates between the terms “film” and “video” in relation to these types of big/small or old/new media formats, I use the term film with regards to Dagbani films (rather than Dagbani videos) as they are referred to as “Dagbani films” in Tamale.

²⁰ While music scholars use the terms “old media” and “new media”, media scholars tend to use the terms “big media” (to refer to largescale filmmaking) and “small media” (to refer to homegrown video productions). For example, media anthropologist Matthias Krings refers to “big media” as film and music productions that are funded by states or large companies, while “small media” represent smaller-scale productions, more akin to “cottage culture industries” (Krings 2015, 6; see also Peterson 2005, 215-218).

writes, academics tended to view these materials as forms of cheap entertainment that borrowed too heavily on Western media (2013, 5). For example, film scholar Frank Ukadike (2000, 247) argued that the use of foreign elements and “alien conventions” in West African videos was akin to mimicry, amounting to the “erosion of knowledge, imagination, and direction”. As Larkin (1997, 429-433), Meyer (1999, 95), and Tcheuyap (2011) further recall, such rhetoric was common in late twentieth century African film scholarship, with academics seeking to emancipate African film entirely from a colonial past, through a rejection of Western influence. The overwhelming success of the Nollywood film industry marked a turning point in the scholarly discourse around African video production and the significance of new/small media within the discipline, with a subsequent shift towards the study of what is commonly termed “popular videos” (Austen and Mahir 2010; Barrot *et al.*, 2008; Haynes 2000; Krings and Okome 2013). Scholars began to write about “small media” industries such as Nigerian and Southern Ghanaian video cultures. The first in-depth exploration of Ghana’s video industries came in 2013, with Garritano’s book *African Video Movies and Global Desires: A Ghanaian History*. This was followed in 2015 by Birgit Meyer’s exploration of Christianity in Ghanaian movie making in her book *Sensational Movies*. There has yet to be scholarship on Northern video industries, apart from it being mentioned in Yamusah’s (2013) thesis.

Though the study of appropriation and creative refashioning in African video scholarship has been slow to warm, important work on African appropriations in media studies have emerged in recent years. They include the work of media scholar Abdalla Adamu (2007a; 2007b; 2008; 2012; 2013), who has written extensively on the adaptation of Hindi films in Hausa videos (from the Northern Nigerian Kannywood industry), as well as Matthias Krings, who explores a range of cinematic, musical, and mediated appropriations in his monograph *African Appropriations: Cultural Difference, Mimesis, and Media*, including a chapter on Hausa video production (2015, 120-149). While the study of active appropriation was contentious for West African film scholars, it is by no means new to film scholarship in other regional contexts. Many scholars of Hindi films have explored this topic, including Anna Morcom (2007) in her study of Hindi film songs, Sangita Shresthova (2011, 22-23) in her work on Bollywood dance, and the respective work of Sheila Nayar (1997) and Tejaswini Ganti (2008), who detail the processes of appropriating Hollywood films in Indian cinema.

Many ethnomusicologists and popular music scholars have embraced the study of globally circulating musics and their many adaptations abroad. Recent scholarship has explored the broad-reaching circulation of recorded music in “physically non-contiguous sites”, destabilising intimate connections between music and place (Nooshin 2011, 92). The study of transnationally circulating music reveals both the channels through which music moves, but also the ways in which “original” or intended meanings associated with particular musical genres become challenged when new audiences engage with foreign musical forms (Nooshin 2011, 92; Erlmann 1999 187-188, 313). Music scholars, media anthropologists, and historians alike have explored the global circulation of music with such questions in mind. Bodies of work include the study of global hip hop, jazz, metal, pop, punk, reggae, rock, salsa, tango, and Western classical music.²¹ While a survey of each body of literature is beyond the scope of this review, I will briefly survey global jazz and global hip hop, subjects that are a part of the study of Ghanaian popular music. I then turn towards a broader survey of scholarship concerned with the global circulation of Hindi film songs.

Jazz is an important musical form in the study of global circulation: emerging in late nineteenth century New Orleans, the genre initially gained popularity throughout the US in the early twentieth century (Harris 2003). With the rise of availability of radios and gramophones throughout the world in the mid-twentieth century, jazz began to grow in popularity outside of the US. During the Cold War, the US government subsequently sent famous jazz musicians including Louis Armstrong abroad to perform throughout the Eastern bloc and in decolonizing countries, further popularising the genre (Von Eschen 2006). Scholars have since detailed the global circulation and performance of jazz in various contexts, including amongst Black British musicians (Dueck 2013; Toynbee, Tackley and Doffman 2014), in China (Jones 2001), across Europe (Harris 2003), in France (Jackson 2003), Ghana (Collins 2006; Feld 2012), India (Booth 2008; Shope 2016), and South Africa (Ansell 2005). In all of these regional contexts, scholars have shown how performers “bring their own musical and cultural backgrounds to bear on the music they make” (Harris 2003, 119). In the Ghanaian context, the popular music genre highlife has been influenced by jazz: though highlife initially referred to the mixture of high-class ballroom and concert programs (introduced by colonial administration) with local folk tunes and street songs, the genre was later greatly influenced by jazz music that had begun circulating in the

²¹ Another useful example is Richard Shain’s (2002) exploration of Cuban and Latin musical flows to Senegal during this period.

region during WWII (Collins 2006, 153; Collins 2005b, 4). Steven Feld details a more contemporary history of Ghanaian jazz in his book, *Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra: Five Musical Years in Ghana* (2012), where he explores the influence of “American jazz greats” such as John Coltrane on jazz musicians in Ghana.

Similarly, scholars have studied hip hop’s presence, deterritorialisation, and translation in a diverse range of places, including Australia (Maxwell 2001), Cuba (Baker 2006), Ghana (Shipley 2013; Osumare 2012), Iran (Nooshin 2011), Japan (Condry 2007), Uganda (Singh 2017), and in various other African contexts (Charry 2012). Hip hop developed through diverse migrant populations of youth living in New York, combining the musical styles and interests of youth from Barbados, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and South America (Saunders 2015, 35-36; Rose 1994). The genre often carries a political connotation, used as a platform to voice concerns of the disenfranchised and for broader social justice movements in the regions where it takes root. In this sense, hip hop serves both “as canvas and template, a blank sheet but also a guide” (Baker 2006, 236). In the early 2010s, Ghanaian music scholars began to write about a growing genre called hiplife, a form of Ghanaian popular music influenced by hip hop (Charry 2012; Osumare, 2012; Shipley 2013). Hiplife is a portmanteau of the genres hip hop and highlife, though the genre is eclectic in nature, combining highlife, hip hop, Akan storytelling, and various other kinds of black diasporic musics (Shipley 2013, 4-7). Global jazz and global hip hop are examples of already eclectic musical genres, that have travelled to disparate regions only to change, adapt, and to be absorbed within other musical styles and scenes, such as in highlife and hiplife.

The Global Circulation of Hindi Film Songs

Beginning in the 1950s, Hindi films also circulated throughout the world, becoming increasingly popular both in regions with large diasporic populations, such as in the Caribbean, Fiji, and England, as well as in regions without large diasporic communities, as is the case in Greece, Turkey, the Soviet Union, Indonesia, Nigeria, and other places. Many scholars have explored the circulation of Hindi film music in these and other regions. Collective scholarly works include Iordanova *et al.* (2006), who draw on anecdotal evidence of Hindi film circulation in a range of places including Morocco, Romania, Senegal, and Turkey, to reconstruct histories of Indian cinema’s transnational influence. Sangita Gopal and Sujata Moorti’s book *Global Bollywood: Travels of Hindi Song and Dance* (2008) was the first edited volume to

explore the global circulation of Hindi film songs and dances, with case examples from disparate regions, from Egypt to Indonesia.

Before I delve into the available literature on Hindi film circulation outside of India, it is important to provide a brief timeline of the global circulation of Hindi films, and define some of the differences between Hindi film songs and Bollywood music, terms that are often used interchangeably. Hindi film songs emerged with sound films in India in 1931 (Morcom 2007, 182).²² By the late 1940s, it was standard for the songs from a film to be released as a gramophone record (Arnold 1991, 115). Hindi films and their soundtracks began to circulate throughout the world during this time. One of the first Hindi films to be a success internationally was *Awara* (1951), and the accompanying film song “Awaara hoon” (I am Vagabond) (Gopal and Moorti 2008, 15-17). *Awara* is mentioned in the majority of scholarly works concerned with the early history of Hindi films abroad, including in Tanzania (Fair 2010), Turkey (Gurata 2010), and amongst Uyghur communities in China (Harris 2007).²³ The earliest film listings I have found for Ghanaian cinemas list *Awara* as playing in theatres in Kumasi and Accra in 1957.²⁴ Following the initial popularity of films like *Awara*, other major films gained success abroad, including *Albela* (1951), *Aan* (1952), *Saqi* (1952), and *Mother India* (1957). Hindi films and their accompanying soundtracks continued to grow in popularity across disparate regions up until the demise of cinema businesses in the 1990s.

This thesis is particularly concerned with the rise in popularity of Hindi film songs in post-colonial Ghana, rather than Bollywood music, a term that refers to a much later period of Indian film and music production. The term “Bollywood” emerged during the 1990s, a period in which the neoliberal restructuring of the Indian state and economy impacted the music, dance styles, plots, and the overall structure of the Indian film industry at large (Ganti 2012, 2-3). Both Madhav Prasad (2003) and Ravi Vasudevan (2008) have explored the emergence of “Bollywood” as a term, partly attributing it to the declining concern of the state, changing of formats, and the establishing of new logics of cultural production. Beginning in the early 1990s, storylines moved away from topics such as the working class and the poor to films with

²² Songs were also an important aspect of silent movies as well, with musicians and singers performing live in the theatres, though these performances were not recorded for distribution (Morcom 2007, 182).

²³ For more information on the widespread popularity of *Awara*, see the article “*Awara* was phenomenally popular” by K Gajendra Singh here: <http://m.rediff.com/movies/2000/may/31abr.htm>

²⁴ Cinema listings for *Awara* can be found in several Ghanaian newspapers at that time, including the *Liberator*, *Spectator Daily*, the *Daily Graphic*, and the *Ghanaian Times*.

wealthy protagonists who live abroad in North America, Europe, or Australia (Ganti 2012, 4-5). Around the same time, dance styles changed, with more athletic and standardised group choreography than before (Morcom 2013, 120; Shresthova 2011, 31). Film music changed as well: through a gradual transition towards computer-aided productions emerged what Gregory Booth terms a “New Bollywood” sound, that was largely guided by the rise of film song composer A.R. Rahman (Booth 2008, 287-291; Beaster-Jones 2011, 131).

In the varying regions where postcolonial Hindi film songs circulated in the mid-twentieth century, older viewers tend to resist the “New Bollywood” sound, and instead, there is a continued market for older Hindi film songs. For example, Laura Fair notes that in Tanzania, older Hindi films are regarded as reflecting deep and serious love between couples and families, while newer films are regarded as superficial, showcasing “wiggling bodies” (Fair 2018, 131). In Senegal, older generations also criticise recent Bollywood films for being “too modern” and similar to Hollywood films (Steene 2008, 126). In Northern Ghana, the market for older Indian films is still so strong that it is rare to find newer Bollywood DVDs for sale in the market.²⁵ During my research, many people (especially informants in their mid-twenties and older) emphasised their preference for older Hindi films, explaining that by the 1990s, the music changed and became too Westernised, with plots that are too sexual in nature.

Africanist film scholar Olivier Barlet (2010, 142) has recently suggested that “if there is a divorce between Bollywood and Africa, it is ultimately because the African public has lost interest in the films, not because they can’t see them anymore”. However, as I have outlined thus far, the situation is much more complex. Where older communities are sceptical of newer Bollywood productions, markets reflect this, and there is a continued stream of older Hindi films reprinted, recirculated, and resold on the market. In fact, when speaking with those involved in reprinting these DVDs for sale on the market, they were acutely aware of the continued popularity of older Hindi films with audiences in Northern Ghana. The rise of high speed internet may complicate audience tastes in future, as over the past several years, a small number of young people in Tamale who have access to high speed internet on their mobile phones are accessing new Bollywood film soundtracks online. Those who can access this new

²⁵ In the past several years, there have been some instances of Dagbani filmmakers downloading newer Bollywood films and film songs to use for their films, with the advent of increased internet access. However it is still rare to find a new Bollywood film for sale in the central market, or to be playing in people’s homes. This may change in future.

media are seemingly more open to the plot lines and imagery of new Bollywood films. Some younger Dagbani filmmakers have even started to adapt new Bollywood songs in their own films geared towards younger viewers. Seeing as most youth lack access to mobile phones and highspeed internet (and thus new Bollywood films), the majority of youth are currently unaware that some recent Dagbani films are adaptations of recent Bollywood films. As this access to new Bollywood media is quite recent and still fairly exclusive, it is unknown at present how newer Bollywood films and music will influence future musical practices in the city.

With the differences between Hindi films and Bollywood in mind, I now return to an overview of literature concerned with the circulation of Hindi film songs abroad during the mid to late twentieth century. In Indonesia, Bettina David (2008) and Andrew Weintraub (2010) have explored the reach of Hindi film songs, where song melodies have been used in the popular genre *dangdut* since its emergence in the 1950s. Nearby in Malaysia, Craig Lockard found that in the 1940s and 1950s, popular Malaysian musicians including Abdul Rahman, Jasni, R. Azmi, and P. Ramlee began to draw on Hindi film songs in their own compositions (1996, 3 and 9-12). By the 1960s and 1970s, Malay pop stars were using instruments from Hindi films as well, while Malay orchestras were drawing on Hindi film melodies in their performances (*ibid* 9). In China, ethnomusicologist Rachel Harris (2007) notes the popularity of Hindi films amongst Uyghur communities, where bootleggers layer Uyghur pop songs over Hindi film videos, and local singers in the countryside compose Uyghur-language covers of Hindi film songs. Anna Morcom (2009, 146) details the popularity of Hindi film songs in Tibet, where Hindi film song VCDs circulate, and where some Nepali dance troupes perform Hindi film songs at nightclubs.²⁶ Writing about music in Afghanistan, John Baily discusses the influence of Hindi film songs on life-cycle genres such as wedding songs (1988, 86-88). In 1950s Turkey, the song “Awara Hoon” from the popular film *Awaara* (1951) “became part of folk culture”, as musicians recorded their own versions of the song (Gurata 2010, 83). In 1950s Romania, professional singer Naarghita became internationally recognised for her live Hindi film song concerts and her Hindi film song recordings (K Gajendra Singh quoted in Iordanova 2006, 123). Rachel Abadzi (2008) and Dimitris Eleftheriotis (2010) discuss

²⁶ Despite it being right next door to India, Tibet is still an unlikely place for Hindi films to travel, as there is no legal import of Bollywood films into China, and few linguistic or musical ties to Bollywood (Morcom 2009, 146).

the reach of Hindi film songs in Greece, where local musicians have adapted Hindi film songs into a genre called *indoprepi*.²⁷

Hindi film songs also circulated throughout Africa to varying degrees beginning in the 1950s. In Northern Nigeria, these melodies have been used in a range of musical contexts, including entertainment music at “low brow” bars and clubs, *bandiri* songs used to praise the Prophet Muhammad, and popular songs used in 1990s Hausa video films (Adamu 2007b; Larkin 2000, 232-233). In Western Nigeria, the Hindi film song style was incorporated into Yoruba popular music, including *jùjú* music, and in regional films starting in the 1970s (Waterman 1990, 2; Okome 1995, 96). In Senegal, “Indophile associations” perform Hindi film songs and dances at their meetings (Steene 2008, 118). In Tamale, Chernoff (1979, 129-130) has noted that Hindi film song melodies were used by street performers such as Albela, who created a whole style of drumming based on the music from Hindi films, while Yamusah (2013, 51) writes of the influence of Hindi film songs in Tamale’s locally produced movie soundtracks. Along the Kenyan coast and in Zanzibar, *taarab* music developed a subgenre known as *taarab ya kihindi* (Indian *taarab*) in the 1930s, also referred to by Janet Topp as “mahadi ya kiHindi” (Indian style) (Eisenberg 2017, 336; Topp 1992, 132).²⁸ Andrew Eisenberg defines Indian *taarab* as “a subgenre of Swahili *taarab* music that features Swahili words set to melodies from Hindi film songs performed in a distinctly Indian style” (2017, 336). Indian *taarab* gained prominence in the 1930s with recordings by Jumbe Ali and Chuba See, and grew in popularity into the post-colonial period, reaching the height of its popularity in the 1980s (Eisenberg 2009, 207-208; 2017, 336-341).²⁹ In Zanzibar, musicians such as Yaseen were using Hindi film song melodies for their own musical recordings beginning in the 1950s, such as using the melody from *Awara Hoon* to write his famous song “Sina Nyumba” (“I Have No Home”) (Eisenberg 2017, 434; Fair 2018, 125).

Other scholars have discussed the influence of Hindi film songs in regions where Indian communities have moved for work, trade, or resettlement. Several

²⁷ For *indoprepi* songs, Hindi lyrics are replaced with Greek lyrics that explore issues of migration and family separation, while musicians speed up the rhythm, simplify complicated vocal styles, and incorporate local instruments (Abadzi 2008).

²⁸ *Taarab* developed in the late nineteenth century, merging Swahili poetry with Arab court music. The genre was popularised throughout the region on a broader scale beginning in the 1920s with the advent of *taarab* records. It became a form of entertainment for all strata of Swahili-speaking coastal society (Eisenberg 2017, 340).

²⁹ Eisenberg also mentions a genre of Swahili language “Bollywood *contrafacta*” produced in India by Indians through the Young India record company in Bombay (2017, 341).

scholars have explored Hindi film music's resonance in diasporic contexts, including with Indian communities living in the US and the UK (Punathambekar 2005; Desai 2006; Dudrah 2008; David 2007). Hindi film music has also been influential in regions with histories of Indian indentured labour, such as in Fiji, Guyana, Suriname, and Trinidad, where Hindi films mediated "real and imagined encounters with India" (Gopal and Moorti 2008, 33). To varying degrees, Peter Manuel (1998), Tejaswini Niranjana (2006), and Tina Ramnarine (2001; 2011) have discussed the rise of Chutney music amongst Indo-Trinidadian communities, where the first few hours of a Chutney musical performance are "devoted to renditions of Hindi film songs by amateur singers" (Manuel 1998, 26).³⁰ Also in Trinidad, Helen Myers writes that beginning in the 1950s, several orchestras played Hindi film music at weddings, parties, on radio, and on television (1998, 127). In the suburbs of Sydney, there are Indo-Fijian communities with bands specialising in Hindi film music and music schools that teach Hindi film song style, as well as community radio programmes that play Hindi film songs on air (Ray 2004, 259).

How did Hindi films and soundtracks reach so many disparate places? In most cases, the distribution of Hindi films in the mid-twentieth century was unsolicited by the Indian film industry itself, often spurred by travelling traders who came across Hindi films by chance (Eleftheriotis 2010, 165). As Eleftheriotis writes of Hindi film circulation in Greece, distribution often happened "at the margins of established national and international distribution/exhibition practices" (*ibid*). Independent distributors bought copies of films throughout their travels, importing and exporting large numbers of low-cost films to disparate regions, while others encountered films through diasporic trade networks they were a part of (*ibid*). In Turkey, small distribution companies bought rights to Hindi films by chance on trips to India (Gurata 2010, 69). Gurata underscores the haphazardness of Hindi film distribution, where Turkish distributors purchased what was available through chance encounters with film companies (*ibid*). What films made it to particular regions depended on the movements of individual distributors who "spotted" popular movies, often long after a film's initial release in India (Eleftheriotis 2010, 166).

In colonial Ghana, Hindi films were bought and distributed by Lebanese, Syrian, and Sindhi businessmen who arrived to Ghana in the 1930s and 1940s,

³⁰ Chutney is an Indian-Caribbean genre with influences from diverse sources, including Indian folk traditions, devotional songs, and film music, as well as Caribbean influences, such as Calypso and Soca (Ramnarine 2001, 4).

traversing broad inter- and intra-colonial trade networks.³¹ These businessmen built cinema halls and established film import/export businesses in major urban centres throughout West Africa. Their histories are explored in depth in Claude Markovits' *The Global World of Indian Merchants, 1750-1947* (2000), and Andrew Arsan's *Interlopers of Empire: The Lebanese Diaspora in Colonial French West Africa* (2014). In the Gold Coast, the Captan brothers (a Lebanese family) and the Nankani brothers (a Sindhi family) built cinemas and imported Hollywood films, Hindi films, and later Hong Kong and Korean action films up until the closure of cinema business in the late 1990s (Garritano 2013, 27-28 and 96-97; Akyeampong 2006, 315; Wuaku 2013, 51-53). In Northern Ghana, the Ghanem family, another Lebanese family who were "the pioneer traders in the Northern Territories", travelled north in the mid-1930s and eventually built cinemas in Tamale, Yendi, Bawku, and Wa in the late 1950s.³² The Captan family built a cinema in Tamale during this time as well, with the encouragement of the CPP.³³ Histories of these merchants reveal the layered and diverse networks through which people and commercial goods moved into West Africa during the late colonial period, and also how these merchants created new consumer tastes by diversifying what was on sale, especially in harder to reach places like Northern Ghana (Akyeampong 2006, 308).³⁴ As I detail in greater depth in Chapter Four, while the state worked towards the building of its own film corporation and the training of its own filmmakers, Ghanaian filmmaking was heavily underfunded throughout the post-colonial period, with only fourteen feature films produced between the late 1950s to the late 1970s (Garritano 2013, 54). As such, Ghanaian audiences engaged with film most frequently at Ghana's Lebanese and Sindhi-owned cinemas, who screened mainly commercial foreign films. This only began to change with the democratisation of media and the rise of video makers in the 1980s.

In West Africa, Hindi films arrived in the international film market at a time when their immediate competition – the Egyptian film industry – was in decline (Armbrust 2008, 211). Though Egyptian films made inroads into West Africa in the mid-twentieth century, colonial anxieties about pan-Islamic uprisings (especially in

³¹ Sindhi merchants were distributors of goods throughout regions of the British empire (Markovits 2000, 17). As a result of France's occupation and mandatory rule in Lebanon and Syria, Lebanese and Syrian merchants were permitted free movement within France and its empire, including Afrique Occidentale Française (AOF) (Arsan 2014, 66 and 101). When using the term intracolonial, I am discussing experiences of Lebanese and Syrian in AOF or Sindhi merchants in Ghana or Nigeria. Likewise, intercolonial refer to the inverse: Lebanese merchants living in Ghana or Sindhi distributors in AOF.

³² "Tamale Ward D New Layout 1946-1954." PRAAD-Tamale. NRG8/1/40. File 87.

³³ "Commercial Area." PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/136.

³⁴ Due to the condensed nature of in-text citation formatting, archival sources have been cited in footnotes throughout this thesis.

French West Africa) resulted in the censoring of Arabic language films, including Egyptian melodramas (Genova 2013, 23-25). By the 1950s, French West African colonial agents banned all Arabic language films, for fear of their “potentially subliminal messages” (*ibid*, 35-38). As Lebanese distributors faced fines or loss of distribution licences if they did not comply with colonial censorship boards, Egyptian films quickly disappeared from cinemas across West Africa (*ibid*, 23-25; Adamu 2008, 156). This was compounded by issues in the organisational structure of the Egyptian film industry, where ineffective protectionist policies meant that Egyptian films began to decline in availability around the time that Hindi films threatened their market (Armbrust 2008, 211; Vitalis 2000, 283-286).³⁵ As well, Hindi films had the chance to establish a stronghold in the African film market prior to the rise of action films from Hong Kong, that began to circulate in North Africa in the 1960s, and in West Africa by the 1970s (Juan Goytisolo quoted in Iordanova 2006, 120).³⁶

Part Two: Hindi Film Song Reception

In the second portion of this review, I detail how Hindi films were received in various regions around the world beginning in the 1950s and 1960s. I argue that the way in which Hindi films were received depended on the political, economic, and social context in which they were screened. In some regions, Hindi films resonated with poorer communities, as many early Hindi films were socials that explored tensions between the wealthy and the poor. The melodramatic form of Hindi films was particularly resonant in these instances, where viewers further engaged with the emotional excess expressed by characters experiencing the injustices of poverty.³⁷ In majority Muslim areas, Hindi films were popular for their use of Islamicate imagery, as well as the use of Arabic loan words found in many Hindi film song lyrics. As well, given the temporally-bounded nature of Hindi films, many film songs are linked to the generational experiences of urban youth, who first encountered these songs following the second world war and during the early post-colonial period, a period of immense economic, political, and social change in urban centres throughout the world.

³⁵ Even in 1960s Egypt, Hindi films such as *Sangam* (1964) and *Suraj* (1966) were competition for major Egyptian films like *Abbi fauq al-shajara* (1969) (Viola Shafik quoted in Iordanova 2006, 131).

³⁶ Conversations with former cinema owners in Accra on 18 November, 2015 and on 22 September 2016.

³⁷ Many Hindi film songs are based on Urdu poetry, that is in itself based on a language of emotions and love (Kesavan 1994, 247; Dwyer 2006, 103).

Reception Studies: A Brief Overview

Reception and audience studies scholars are concerned with the ways in which communities interpret and experience media around them as it relates to their everyday lives. Scholarly work in this vein began in the 1970s with Hans Robert Jauss' (1978) book, *Towards an Aesthetics of Reception*. In this text, Jauss proposes a triangular relationship between author, work, and public, with each playing an active role in the process of address and interpretation (Biron 2009, 330-331). Umberto Eco's (1979) text, *The Role of the Reader*, detailed differences between the virtual context-free text and the "realised" text, suggesting that there are multiple context-dependent versions of a text dependent on the reader. Stuart Hall's (1981) model of encoding and decoding was similar in this regard, though he proposed a structuralist reading of text, in which there are preferred and alternative readings of a given text (Morley 1993, 13). By the mid-1980s, audience studies scholars turned towards the interpretive activities of audiences, in line with a poststructuralist and postmodern view of the influence of media (Press and Livingstone 2005, 175). This scholarly turn, referred to as "active audience studies", has origins in British cultural studies. Scholars began to engage directly with audiences to know more about their own meaning-making processes (*ibid*). Active audience studies was influenced by feminist scholarship, and as such, the foundational texts of this period focus on women's engagement with television shows, novels, and radio programs, including Janice Radway's *Reading the Romance* (1984) and Ien Ang's *Watching Dallas* (1985). Such works were ethnographically bound; they took everyday life and everyday pleasures into account, focussing more closely on viewers themselves than the given meaning of a film, movie, or novel.

The main focus of early active audience studies was on popular literature, television, and radio programmes. The majority of scholarly work in this vein focussed on television audiences (Hermes 1993; Rath 1985; Silverstone 1994; Willis 1990), with some focussing on the role of radio and television in girls' and women's lives (Hobson 1980; Gray 1992; Stacey 1994). As has been noted by various scholars, music is largely missing from new audience studies of this era (Bennett 2012, 200; Zaborowski 2016, 454; Lacey 2013, 3-4). Instead, music scholarship concerned with audiences has largely focussed on the study of fandom, such as Daniel Cavicchi's (1998) work on Bruce Springsteen fans, Erika Doss' (1999) scholarship on Elvis fandom and more recently Matt Hills' (2007) research on Michael Jackson fans.³⁸ Zaborowski (2016, 454-455)

³⁸ For a more detailed overview of this scholarly trajectory, see Bennett 2012, 200.

argues that such musicological work also tends to focus on events, such as concerts or album releases, rather than the daily experiences of fans. He suggests that audience studies shies away from music because the meaning of music is too inherent and embedded to unpack (*ibid*). The seemingly ingrained nature of the meaning of music will be discussed later in this thesis with regard to Turino's (1999; 2008) discussion of Peircean semiotics, where music can function as index and icon, and is further involved in the process of "semantic snowballing" through generations, collecting new associational meanings while maintaining earlier associations as well (2008, 146).

In the mid-1990s, the emergence of media anthropology as a subdiscipline of anthropology was influential for audience and reception studies. Media anthropology grew in popularity following anthropology's acceptance of work in urban centres, where the impact of media was omnipresent (Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod and Larkin 2002a, 3-5). Beginning in the early to mid-1990s, anthropologists began to take media seriously as a topic of study, and many engaged with audiences directly in their research (Press and Livingstone 2005, 175; Morley 1993, 16; Moores 1993, 3-5). Building on the work of active audience studies, media anthropologists pushed the boundaries of where media and audience scholarship took place, moving beyond European and American case studies to explore the impact, influence, and reception of theatre, literature, films, and music in regions such as India (Mankekar 1993), Nigeria (Larkin 1997), and Kenya (Fuglesang 1994). Several key edited collections in this vein emerged in the mid-to late 1990s, including a special edition of the journal *Africa* titled "Audiences in Action" (1997b), in which Karin Barber urges new scholars to explore how performance events "live on to resonate in [people's] lives and in other texts they produce and recirculate from day to day" (Barber 1997a, xvi). Another key text is *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain* (2002b), that details a range of diverse perspectives on the emergence of media anthropology as a discipline, exploring media production "beyond the studio" and media reception "beyond the living room" (*ibid*, 1). In the realm of musicology, Georgina Born (2005; 2010; 2011; 2012; Born and Devine 2015) has also contributed a great deal to the study of music's mediation, theorizing music's changing ontology with the rise of varied technologies throughout the twentieth century, as well as more recent changes with the onset of digital media.

Hindi Films and Class Struggle

Many scholars have noted how class, education, and status determined who watched Hindi films in the mid-twentieth century. While Hindi films remained popular at working class movie houses in Athens, they were less popular with the educated and salaried “elite” or middle class audiences, who tended to look “Westward for entertainment” (Abadzi 2008). Greece’s elite audiences aspired towards Europeanisation, and subsequently thought of Hindi films as part of an “undesirable past” (Abadzi 2008; Dimitris Eleftheriotis 2010, 174). Similarly in 1950s Turkey, there was “a clear divide between audiences”, in which “cultured” urban audiences attended American and European films, who preferred the “technically superior and ultimately ‘Western’ Hollywood films, while ‘second-run’ cinemas played Turkish and Indian films” (Gurata 2010, 75 and 86; Asuman Suner quoted in Iordanova 2006, 136).³⁹ In Marrakesh, Hindi films were regarded as “a factory of dreams” for the uneducated poor (Iordanova 2006, 121; Goytisolo and Bush 2003, 20). In Soviet Russia, Hindi films featured glamour, fashion, and music, alongside uplifting stories of poor individuals “making it big”, stories that appealed to those who worked long hours in post-war factories (Rajagopalan 2008, 2-3 and 93). In 1960s Egypt, Hindi films were mainly released in lower income neighbourhoods, while in Burkina Faso, elite communities feared that Hindi films would give youth a “warped view of the world” (Viola Shafik quoted in Iordanova 2006, 132; Skinner 1974, 287).

The timing of Hindi film’s rising popularity abroad in the 1950s coincided with some key changes in the global economy. WWII disrupted many regional economies, and subsequently many rural populations moved to the cities to find work, while others emigrated to new countries to survive and find better lives. For urban migrant communities undergoing major economic and social change, Hindi films detailed stories of poverty, social upheaval, and family dislocation similar to their own (Abadzi 2008; Eleftheriotis 2010, 166 and 172; Gurata 2010, 75). For example, in post-liberation Greece, the war destroyed large portions of countryside in a largely agricultural nation, forcing people to migrate into Athens or to emigrate to Germany to work for low wages (Abadzi 2008). The popularity of Hindi films in Turkish cities coincided with the mass migrations of rural populations and migrant labourers into the

³⁹ Interestingly, though Indian films typically slotted into the non-elite category in Turkey, the film *Awara* bridged socioeconomic gaps, appealing to both elite and working class audiences in the country (Gurata 2010, 86).

cities, so that urban populations increased by seventy-five percent during this time (Gurata 2010, 75).

The Gold Coast similarly experienced the movement of thousands of French West African migrants and WWII veterans into major urban centres in the 1950s, who fled the imposition of rationing in their home countries during the post-war years (Rouch 1954, 9). These migrant communities subsequently lived in urban migrant neighbourhoods (known as “Zongos”), where cinemas played substantially more Hindi films than in higher-income neighbourhoods (McFeely 217-218 and 256). Such communities lived in poverty, with little access to employment in the formal sector (Williamson 2014). For example, Nima, one of the largest migrant neighbourhoods in Accra, screened “a far higher proportion of Indian films” than elsewhere in the city (McFeely 2015, 58). Similarly, in a newspaper article detailing the history of cinema in Ghana, a journalist recalls how when an Indian film was showing, “the majority of the patronage [came] from the Zongo community” (Akumanyi 1986). In my conversations with various cinema owners active in Ghana during the post-colonial period, many echoed this demographic pattern, recalling how Hindi films were particularly popular in poorer migrant neighbourhoods, as well as throughout the majority Muslim north of the country where there were higher rates of poverty.⁴⁰ Around this time, Ghana’s upper classes preferred leisure activities aligned with a sense of Western modernity, including concert hall music and ballroom dancing (Newell 2002; 57; Prais 2014, 199-203). There is little scholarship that explicitly links “elite” communities to Hollywood films of the 1950s, though religion scholar Birgit Meyer writes that there were “different ‘classes’ of cinema that attracted different ‘classes’ of people, with different tastes and viewing behaviours” (2015, 46-47). This is likely because different types of Hollywood films had already been differentiated based on class lines prior to the arrival of Hindi films in the 1950s. In 1920s and 1930s Ghana, American Western (Cowboy) films were known to be popular with lower classes (to the extent that elite communities used the term “cowboy films” as a euphemism for low quality films), while the “more educated” audiences of this period preferred Hollywood musicals instead (McFeely 2015, 270). Similar trends are noted in Charles Ambler’s (2001) work on American Western film reception in colonial Rhodesia, and in Ch. Didier Gondola (2016) more recent exploration of American Western films’ influence in Kinshasa’s townships. When Hindi films arrived later to Ghana in the post-colonial period, they were largely

⁴⁰ Conversations with former cinema owners in Accra on 18 November, 2015 and on 22 September 2016.

relegated to the same lower-income migrant neighbourhoods in which Cowboy films once resonated.⁴¹

At the same time that “elite” audiences preferred European and American dramas, various case studies show how “popular audiences” disliked the “realist” plots and stories of 1950s Hollywood films. For example, in Marrakesh, many preferred Hindi films to “the usual realistic/psychological productions from Europe and America” that were considered by some audience members to be “colonising [their] screens” (Goytisolo and Bush 2003, 20; Juan Goytisolo quoted in Iordanova 2006, 121). In 1960s Burkina Faso, Hindi films including *Pather Panchali* (1955) and *Do Bigha Zamin* (1953) were popular because they used music and dance to tell stories of poverty and hardship, championing family and community values over individualism (Ilboudo 1962). These themes were missing from the “too individualistic” European films also available in Ouagadougou’s cinema halls at that time (*ibid*).⁴² In Kenya, the oppositional themes of village/city, poverty/wealth, and community/individualism were noted as being part of the reason why Hindi films resonated there (Fuglesang 1994, 168). In other words, postcolonial Hindi films engaged with a melodramatic moral universe that was missing from Hollywood and European productions of that time. As a genre, melodramas are built on oppositions between “good and evil, country and city, Indian and Western, purity and sexuality, duty and desire” (Vasudevan 1989, 38-39). Hindi films triumphed community over the individual, the sanctity of the extended family unit over nuclear homes, and the importance of rural life over the gloss of urbanity (Vasudevan 1995, 307).⁴³ Postcolonial Hindi films became sites for “working out the contours of an Indian modernity in which capitalist processes of development championed by the state...proceed alongside habitual pre-capitalist social relations” (Sarkar 2009, 117-119). Vasudevan suggests that this pre-capitalist/capitalist tension in early Hindi socials had a “special resonance in ‘transitional’ societies”, accounting for

⁴¹ Hindi films were typically three-hours long, offering a longer period of entertainment for the same ticket price. Though this was not the only reason that poorer communities attended Hindi films, it is an aspect that has been mentioned by informants in my research and noted by other scholars as well (McFeely 2015, 216-217).

⁴² Even the president of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) was aware of this, having noted in 1961 that African audiences enjoyed Indian films because “they can identify with the hardships and hazards and hopes of Indian life as they see it in these films” (Johnston 1961, quoted in McFeely 2015, 217-218).

⁴³ Melodrama initially entered into Indian theatre arts via Victorian domestic melodramas, as during the latter half of the nineteenth century, dozens of popular melodramas from England moved throughout China, Southeast Asia and India via Australian theatre groups (Hansen 2016, 2). These were British families who had immigrated to Australia, such as the Lewis Dramatic Troupe. Their performances influenced a range of Parsi theatre writers in India, who included and adapted plays and music into their own compositions (*ibid*).

their popularity with viewers in East and North Africa, the Middle East, South-East Asia, the USSR, and China (Vasudevan 1995, 306).

Another aspect of Hindi films that resonated with poorer audiences at this time was the emotional excess of Hindi films, that often evoked emotion from audiences in the cinema halls. In Yugoslavia, Rada Sestic notes how the film *Bidai* (1974) made viewers cry, noting how her family and neighbours attended the cinema to “feel for the wretched boys, to cry, and sing with them” (Rada Sestic quoted in Iordanova 2006, 128). Amongst Uyghur communities in China, Rachel Harris (2007) writes how Hindi films “filled a gap created by the Cultural Revolution” and represented “the possibility of the return of romance and emotion”. In Turkey, Hindi films made audiences weep and cry while also being cheerful and uplifting, offering a film that gave room for emotional catharsis while also providing a happy ending (Asuman Suner quoted in Iordanova 2006, 136). In a published interview, famed Malian film director Souleymane Cissé cites his favourite films as the American Western film, *High Noon* (1952), and “East Indian movies” that brought “tears to [his] eyes.”⁴⁴ In Lamu, Kenya, Minou Fuglesang (1994, 173) writes of Hindi film viewership as an “emotional act”, particularly for women, who openly empathised with struggling characters. In Indonesia, Andrew Weintraub (2010, 60) shows how Hindi film song melodies were used by Dangdut musicians because they were emotionally moving for audiences. As I explore in more depth in Chapter Seven, Dagbani filmmakers also use Hindi film song melodies in their melodramatic productions, as the lilting melodies and wavering vocal approach of the original film songs work well in Dagbani film scenes where characters sing through their tears.

Islamicate Culture

In many Muslim regions throughout the world, such as in Indonesia (Weintraub 2010), Northern Nigeria (Adamu 2007a and 2012; Larkin 1997 and 2004), and Cameroon (Barlet 2010, 139), Hindi films have been popular in part for their Islamicate iconography. Mashall Hodgson defines “Islamicate” as the “social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and the Muslims, both among Muslims themselves and even when found among non-Muslims” (Hodgson quoted in Kesavan

⁴⁴ Cressole, Michel. “Le Souffle de Souleymane Cissé.” *Libération* (596), 19.

1994, 246).⁴⁵ Early Hindi cinema featured Muslim characters and Islamicate architecture and fashion throughout, as well as images of “the good life” and decadence derived from a “part-fantasised vision of nawabi Lucknow, which was nostalgically remembered as the last bastion of Islamicate culture” (Kesavan 1994, 251). The Islamicate iconography embedded within early Hindi cinema directly appealed to majority Muslim viewers abroad. For example, Abdalla Adamu writes of the popularity of Hindi films in Northern Nigeria: “the Islamicate environment in Northern Nigeria created a preference for eastern-flavoured visual entertainment due to perceived similarities between Muslim eastern cultures and Hausa Muslim cultures” (Adamu 2007, 77). Both Brian Larkin (1997, 412-413) and Adamu (2012, 33) note how the mode of dress in older Hindi films resonated with postcolonial Hausa viewers, where the modest clothing of older Hindi films was in line with the expectations of Muslim Hausa viewers.⁴⁶ Similarly in Tamale, a city located on the geographic fringes of Muslim West Africa, Hindi films were popular in large part because of their Islamicate iconography, that were embedded within many films screened in the city. Such films include *Saat Sawal* (1971), *Noorie* (1979), *Ali Baba Aur 40 Chor* (1980), *Coolie* (1983), *Sanam Bewafa* (1991) and *Khuda Gawah* (1992).

As has been noted by Mukul Kasavan (*ibid*) and Rachel Dwyer (2006), early Hindi cinema was in many ways Urdu cinema, and Hindi film song lyrics use key words borrowed from Urdu’s Perso-Arabic lexicon.⁴⁷ Persian and Arabic loan words were audible in many Hindi film song lyrics of this era, and were familiar to Muslim audiences in disparate regions, implying a strong link between Hindi films and a broader Islamic world. For example, with concern to Northern Nigeria, Larkin notes how Arabic loan words found in Hindi films established a sense of shared language for Hausa viewers, given the embeddedness of Arabic loan words in the Hausa language as well (1997, 435). Gwenda Yander Steene’s Senegalese informants pointed to similarities between their own languages (including Wolof, Fulani, and Serer) and Hindi, as the languages share Arabic loan words throughout (2012, 312). Similarly in Tamale, many I spoke with pointed to the audible use of Arabic loan words in Hindi films, such as “*ishq*” (passion), “*duniya*” (world), and “*qurbani*” (sacrifice), that linked

⁴⁵ Ira Bhaskar (2009), Ali Nobil Ahmad (2016), and Rachel Dwyer (2013 and 2016, 118) have explored the place of Islamicate culture in Hindi films.

⁴⁶ Despite these potential Islamicate links, Hindi films were deemed un-Islamic in Northern Nigeria in 2001 following the introduction of Sharia Law, to the extent that some Hindi films were publicly burned by Islamic leaders at the time (Adamu 2007a, 85; Larkin 2004b, 302).

⁴⁷ That the heavy influence of Urdu is not recognised in the advertising of “Hindi language films” has more to do with “Hindi’s status as the national language of India and Urdu’s as that of Pakistan, and the increasing association of Urdu with India’s minority Muslim population” (Dwyer 2006, 103).

Hindi films to a broader Islamic world for Dagbamba viewers. Dagbani language similarly includes various borrowed Arabic words throughout, such as *ghafar* (forgive) or *duniya* (the world).

Though there is limited work on the adoption of Hindi film song melodies into Muslim performative contexts, there are several examples. In the context of North Indian *qawwālī*, a form of Sufi devotional music, Peter Manuel and Regula Qureshi both note how Sufi musicians sometimes set devotional texts to familiar Hindi film song melodies (Manuel 1993, 102-136; Qureshi 1995, 19). There is also *filmi qawwālī*, a genre of *qawwālī* songs used in Hindi films (Qureshi 1995, 47). Film directors usually choose these popularised *qawwālī* songs in film scenes related to Muslim subjects and characters, as part of creating an Islamicate atmosphere in the scene (Morcom 2007, 82; Qureshi 1999, 82). Both Brian Larkin and Abdalla Adamu have explored the use of Hindi film song melodies in Sufi praise music in Northern Nigeria. Adamu writes that beginning in the 1980s and into the 1990s, all-girl choirs at Islamiyya schools (“modern” Qur’anic schools) sang praise songs set to familiar Hindi film song melodies, detailing their love for the Prophet (Adamu 2012, 41-42). Beginning in the mid-1980s, another religious genre emerged in Northern Nigeria called *bandiri* (named after a type of frame drum), in which Islamic poets set praises for the Prophet to Hindi film song melodies (Adamu 2012, 42; Adamu 2007b, 14; Larkin 2004a, 91-92). These songs are performed live at public ceremonies like weddings and distributed on cassettes in the market (Larkin 2004a, 92). In Chapter Six, I show how Islamic school teachers in Tamale similarly set Arabic praise texts atop Hindi film song melodies in preparation for the *mawlid* celebrations each year, a practice that emerged partly because of the perceived Islamicate nature of Hindi films for Muslim viewers in Tamale.

Generational Experiences of Hindi Film Songs

Throughout the post-colonial period, the cinema was a feature of a growing urban public, centred around waged employment (Barber 1997b, 350). The cinema was at the centre of public association, often built between the mosque and the market, encouraging “ritualistic attendance” (Larkin 1998, 49). Such urban centres “brought together people of disparate social, ethnic and political backgrounds” who were “unmoored from hometown constraints” (Cole 2001, 86). With access to cash labour, youth could spend money on imported goods, fashion, and leisure activities such as

cinema shows (Barber 1997b, 349-359). Youth in many postcolonial urban centres connected intimately through their experiences with this new urban world, engaging through the music and films they shared (Niranjana 2018, 261). In various regional contexts, Hindi films became a part of postcolonial urban youth culture; to be a part of an emerging postcolonial youth culture was to know the songs, dances, and rhythms from the films, and to sport the accompanying fashion, such as young girls wearing bindis and saris.⁴⁸ For example, in the context of 1960s Tanzania, Fair (2018, 35) writes how one could make clear their engagement and participation in cinematic and youth cultures through their discussions of films in streets, kitchens, or classrooms, but also through their fashion, including “adopting hairstyles, hats, clothing, and modes of comportment modelled on a character in a film”. In the case of Northern Nigeria, Larkin also details how Hausa viewers engaged with the fashion, beauty, and romance of Hindi films in their everyday lives (1997, 406). Similar trends took place throughout the world, including in North India, where folk musicians used melodies from Hindi films to appear “trendy, urban, and modern”, aligning with contemporary Indian popular culture (Marcus 1993, 102-104).⁴⁹

⁴⁸ This is also evidenced in John Miller Chernoff’s photo gallery of Tamale from the 1970s, where girls have drawn bindis on their foreheads. This is available to see online ([http://adrummerstestament.com/images/Images_\(3-1_%20to_3-16\)_children.html](http://adrummerstestament.com/images/Images_(3-1_%20to_3-16)_children.html)), beginning with the third photograph.

⁴⁹ Unless otherwise stated, photographs have been taken by the author.



Figure 2 "Maggie in a Sari"
5 January, 1969 *Sunday Mirror (Ghana)* (in association with the Daily Graphic)

Caption: "Receptionist Margaret Kotey is a Ghanaian who decided to go the Indian-way at a wedding of a friend in Accra. In a Sari, Maggie was graceful in the Indian attire."



Figure 3 "Go Indian"

22 December, 1972 *The Mirror (Ghana)* (in association with the Daily Graphic)

Caption: "First it was 'Go Malian'; then interest focused on the Nigerian way of dressing. Now it's 'Go Indian' according to Rosemond Eggle of Accra. Rosemond, who is a seamstress, made this charming Indian outfit herself. It is known as a Sari.



Figure 4 “Jeet Poses with Government Worker in Town”
Date Unknown

Caption: A photo from one Hindi film fan named Jeet’s private photo collection. Photo taken in Tamale. On the right, Jeet (named after his favourite actor, Jeetendra) poses with an Indian government worker in town in order to recreate the movie poster for the film *Dostana* (1980).

In some cases, those postcolonial youth who once went to the cinema now meet weekly at Hindi film fan clubs, and run Hindi film radio shows.⁵⁰ From the 1960s to the present day, there have been Indian fan clubs in Senegal, including the organisation of *Les Amis de L'Inde* (Friends of India) and the Mohammed Rafi Club, that held annual singing competitions to crown “the Mohammed Rafi of Africa” (Steene 2008, 117; K Gajendra Singh quoted in Iordanova 2006, 125). Also in Tamale, there are several Hindi film fan clubs. Each club has larger events to draw in new members: for example, one group screened Hindi films at sub-chief palaces throughout Tamale and surrounding villages in 2016. At each screening, group leaders gave speeches about how Hindi films would bring today’s youth back to the morality of the past, as Hindi films would inspire modest dress and respect for parents.⁵¹ In Senegal, radio broadcasters programme Indian music and discuss questions around the Hindi film industry, continually reintroducing old Hindi film songs onto the airwaves (Steene 2008, 117 and 132).⁵² During my time in Tamale in 2016 and 2017, five weekly radio shows played Hindi film songs, meaning that most nights old Hindi film songs were played on air. Shows are hosted by “specialists” who have learned to speak Hindi from movies in order to answer listeners’ questions about Hindi films.

With time, those youth who grew up watching Hindi films at the cinema began to have families of their own, and as a result, the function of Hindi film songs in Tamale changed. As I explore in depth in Chapter Five, Hindi film songs were experienced by the children of these urban youth as the music of their parents’ generation. This trend is evidenced in other African contexts: in Tanzania, Fair (2018, 131) describes youth playing the songs from movies like *Awaara* (of their parent’s generation), singing along with their parents and grandparents in the same room. For Senegalese youth, old films of their parents’ generation remain familiar, despite these films being made decades before they were born (Steene 2008, 126). In this situation,

⁵⁰ My approach for studying musical movement in Tamale is similar to scholarly work concerned with music parody (the recycling of the melody or rhythm of one song in another). The most common form of musical parody discussed in academic literature is the borrowing of melodies for new musical use. While not always the case, the original “source” melody often remains recognizable through its many iterations across time and space. For example, musicians might borrow a song’s lyrics, instrumentation, style, or rhythm.

⁵¹ In many regions, older Hindi films are considered chaste and moral, while alluding to romance and physical intimacy. In Turkey, for example, audiences preferred Hindi films for their modesty (including the modest dress and shyness of the protagonists) in comparison to belly dancing found in Turkish films (Gurata 2010, 81-83).

⁵² Nigeria also has Indian film appreciation societies, such as the Society for Lovers of India (*Kungiyar Ushaq’u Indiya*), a group that focusses on adapting Hindi film soundtracks with Hausa lyrics, praising the Prophet (Adamu 2007b, 15; Larkin 2004a, 97).

Hindi films function as indices, where a sign relates to an object through co-occurrence of one's life experiences (Turino 1999, 227; Turino 2008, 13). The songs have undergone the process of "semantic snowballing" through generations, collecting new associational meanings while maintaining earlier associations as well (Turino 2008, 146). An "aural passage", these songs convey both past and present performances simultaneously, placing the two performances in interactive dialogue (Monson 1996, 127).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have surveyed the circulation of Hindi film music abroad during the post-colonial period, and further reviewed the ways that film songs were received in these varying regional contexts. The first section details the changing ways in which music moved and circulated beginning in the 1930s, following the advent of new transportation technologies and the introduction of recorded music. Hindi films subsequently circulated in various non-diasporic contexts such as China, Ghana, Greece, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Romania, Senegal, Tanzania, Tibet, and Turkey, as well as in diasporic contexts including the UK, the US, the Caribbean, and Fiji. I have shown how major recording corporations and postcolonial governments influenced the circulation of particular kinds of music to the exclusion of others, and how this changed with the advent of personal recording technologies in the 1980s, such as cassettes and video cameras, that offered a more democratic and participatory way to produce music and media at the grassroots level. I related these technological and political changes to the trajectory of academic scholarship of the time, reviewing major changes in thinking within the fields of ethnomusicology and film scholarship respectively. The second part of this chapter explored how Hindi film songs were received and experienced in new contexts, exploring reasons why these films and soundtracks resonated across different regions and in particular social spheres. Some reasons for their popularity include their exploration of poverty and class, their melodramatic form and the emotional nature of songs, their Islamicate iconography that resonated with majority Muslim communities, and their generational gloss in the postcolonial urban milieu.

When Hindi films circulated from India to various urban centres throughout the world, they were met by a range of individuals – from migrant labourers, to Muslim communities, to urban youth engaging with the gloss and fashion of Hindi films. How

these audiences encountered music in the cinema hall, and what they did with the music after they left, was entirely dependent on the relationship each individual had to music in their everyday lives. In Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven, I explore musical circulation and reception not only in its extended, global or transnational sense, but also on the ground, as music circulates through spaces and people in the everyday moments of urban life. In the following chapter, I explore the mixed-method approach I used in order to research music in such varied contexts in Tamale, despite the limited available literature on mediated music and film in Northern Ghana at present.

Chapter Three: Research Methods: Bridging Historical and Ethnographic Approaches

Messy Histories

In 2015, the journal *History in Africa* featured a special issue on writing African histories after 1960. In it, Luise White, an eminent historian of colonial and postcolonial Africa, asks scholars of the post-colonial period (a period for which archival material is scant at best) to “take the mess as their starting point” (2015, 313). When you begin with the mess, she continues, “the gaps and fissures are not simply problems or absences in the archival record, they are clues to what the gaps and fissures were in official thinking and policies” (*ibid*). Building on Todd Shepard’s concept of “messy history”, White calls her approach “hodgepodge historiography”, a method that requires sources found outside of the archive (Shepard 2006; White 2015, 314). Akin to White, African media anthropologist Debra Spitulnik (1998, 64) encourages postcolonial media scholars to move beyond conventional historical sources, engaging with “each bit of linguistic evidence, archival data, interview commentary, and print media” to create more holistic histories. In her historical work in Gabon, Florence Bernault (2015, 277) also asks readers to take seriously the use of “odd findings” and heterodox pieces, forms that often seem like “trivial choices” made from “chance encounters” in the field.

In my own research, the study of foreign films, cinemas, popular musics, and local musicians in a postcolonial urban centre necessitated a “messy” mixed-methods approach. There was no single archive or specific community offering a rich collection of materials or commentary on Tamale’s postcolonial cinema halls and popular music. Instead, from the outset, I employed every methodological tool I had to seek out information on the history of Hindi film songs in Northern Ghana, among them interviews, participant observation research, and archival work, bridging methodologies from ethnomusicology and African history.⁵³ As this methodology chapter details, I have embraced what postcolonial historians term “messiness”, noting resonances between sources and across varied orders of data, where each data set reveals only partial truths (Clifford and Marcus 1986, 6; Nettl 2005, 292). In what

⁵³ Unless otherwise requested, all names of participants have been anonymised. In some instances, I refer to informants by their job title (such as filmmaker or religious leader). In sections where I discuss more than one person with a similar title, I have added letter names in their interview information in the footnotes to differentiate between them. For example, in Chapter Seven, I refer to filmmakers in the footnotes as filmmaker A, filmmaker B, playback singer A, etc.

follows, I outline the methodological developments of ethnomusicology and African history, highlighting ways in which the two disciplinary approaches resonate with and complement each other.

An Interdisciplinary Approach

Ethnomusicology has roots in both comparative musicology and anthropology, and from its early development in the 1950s, the discipline employed ethnographic methods. Ethnomusicological methods thus include language acquisition, extended stays “in the field”, participation in musical events, and social and cultural immersion. Ethnography as method soon became embedded within the discipline, especially following the emergence of a school of American ethnomusicologists with anthropological training, led by Alan Merriam (Howard 2014, 338; McCollum and Hebert 2014a, 3; Orsini and Schofield 2015, 4). Ethnomusicologists with anthropological training argued for a study of “music in culture”, with intensive ethnographic fieldwork as the discipline’s primary method (Myers 1993, 7).

As Ruth Stone notes, the dearth of historical perspective in ethnomusicology from the 1950s to the late 1980s was “influenced, in part, by a vein of anti-historical feeling that ran through anthropology” (2008, 180). This phenomenon grew out of largely Western scholarly canons, that encouraged mainly American and European anthropologists to travel to a “field”, often far away from their homes. Through a Eurocentric lens, some scholars understood the foreign social and cultural processes they observed as fixed and unchanging, and because many field sites were void of text-based historical documents, researchers did not probe regional histories in depth (Evans-Pritchard 1962, 47). This methodological approach was, of course, quite different from that of historians, whose work depended on engagement with the past (including archival texts, artefacts, and later oral histories) in order to chart dynamic changes (Henige 2007, 169).

The anti-historical feeling in anthropology began to dissolve in the 1990s, when the discipline saw a well-documented “turn” back towards history (McCollum and Hebert 2014a, 3; Stoler 2002b, 83-84).⁵⁴ Eric Wolf’s *Europe and the People Without*

⁵⁴ That anthropology turned “back” to historical methods was a contentious matter: many anthropologists understood the turn towards historical approaches as a return to cultural anthropology’s original practices, while others viewed the turn as a significant departure from anthropology’s wholly ethnographic methodological approaches that had previously largely disregarded history (Stoler 2002b; McCollum and Hebert 2014a, 3).

History was ground-breaking in this disciplinary shift, providing a critique of Eurocentrism in academic traditions that sought “pristine replicas of the pre-capitalist, pre-industrial past in the margins of the capitalist, industrial world” (Wolf 1997, 18-19). Wolf urged anthropologists to recognise and reveal the larger world histories of economic and political interconnectedness inherent in their topics of study (*ibid*). With ethnomusicology’s ties to anthropology, it is possible that the return to history in anthropology influenced the more recent engagement with historical methods in ethnomusicology as well, such as the establishing of the Special Interest Group for Historical Ethnomusicology at the Society for Ethnomusicology in 2005, and David Hebert and Jonathan McCollum’s (2014a) recent book *Theory and Method in Historical Ethnomusicology*.

Ethnomusicology’s initial reluctance towards historical methods also has to do with tensions between ethnomusicology and the closely related discipline of musicology. Following a formal split with musicology in the mid-1950s, many ethnomusicologists distanced their approach from musicological methods which centred around archival research (Shelemay 1980, 233). These long-held disciplinary divisions became blurred with the advent of “new musicology” in the 1980s, when musicologists including Joseph Kerman, Rose Rosengard Subotnik, and Susan McClary argued for the legitimacy of methods and frameworks developed in anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, and feminist scholarship. More recently, musicologists and ethnomusicologists have questioned the disciplinary and methodological divisions between musicology and ethnomusicology, most clearly evidenced in musicologist Nicholas Cook’s 2008 article “We are all (Ethno)musicologists Now”.

Beginning in the 1970s, some ethnomusicologists argued for the use of historical methods in the discipline, such as Kay Kaufman Shelemay, who used historical methods in her work to “deepen understandings of music cultures in their total environment” (Shelemay 1980, 233-234).⁵⁵ Ruth Stone (2008, 186) similarly argued for the benefits of archival methods in ethnomusicological research, which stand to “corroborate oral accounts and texture ethnographic accounts”. In the 1980s,

⁵⁵ Around the same time, Laurence Picken published *Music from the Tang Court*, a text that openly rejects the concept of a historical continuum, deliberately ignoring contemporary living traditions and performance practices in order to consult manuscripts with “no more information than that given in the manuscripts themselves” (Picken 1981, 11). As Keith Howard notes, Picken’s approach influenced many East Asian music scholars at the time, developing into a “Picken School” of historical methodology (Howard 2014, 337).

Timothy Rice (1987, 485) proposed a new model for ethnomusicology, arguing for historical depth as a key proponent to ethnomusicological research.⁵⁶ He called for a re-engagement with musicological methods, noting that: “historical musicologists have much to teach ethnomusicologists about historical and individual creative processes, just as [ethnomusicologists] have much to teach [musicologists] about the powerful forces of contemporary culture on musical sound structures” (*ibid*, 482). Several years later, Stephen Blum, Philip Bohlman, and Daniel Neuman (1991) explored the use of historical methods in ethnomusicology in a collection of essays titled *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*. In subsequent years, Veit Erlmann proposed that scholars take a blended historical and ethnographic approach to the study of music’s global processes, that are in a “constant state of movement and displacement”, fluctuating over time in account of larger global processes (1999, 7-8).

Ethnomusicologists researching African music have engaged critically with historiographic methods for decades. There are many excellent examples of early Africanist historical ethnomusicologists who worked through oral histories, archival material, and histories embedded within musical performances. Joseph Kwabena Nketia contributed copious amounts of historical research on Ghanaian music in the early years of ethnomusicology, including *The Music of Africa* (1974), “Historical Evidence in Ga Religious Music” (1964), and “The Scholarly Study of African Music: A Historical Review” (1998). Also of note is Klaus Wachsmann’s (1971) collection “Essays on Music and History in Africa”, David Coplan’s (1978) early research on the social history of Ghanaian music, and Kofi Agawu’s (1995) book *African Rhythm: A Northern Ewe Perspective*. As already noted, John Collins has conducted significant research on the history of popular music in West Africa (1985a; 1989), and has also worked in preservation of West African popular music by establishing the Bokoor African Popular Music Archives in Accra. More recently, significant historical work on West African music has been undertaken by Eric Charry (2000a), Steven Feld (2012), and Nate Plageman (2013).

Many historians of colonial Africa spend their days working through stacks of paper materials from the colonial period at official archives, such as those I visited in Accra, Kumasi, and Tamale. Documents at these archives are typically written in European languages by European officers and administrators, with clear bias in

⁵⁶ Timothy Rice (1987, 485) referred to Shelemay’s discussion of historical ethnomusicology as a “remarkable reversal” of the usual claims about the usefulness of history to illuminate studies of the present.

perspective. With the growth of postmodernist thought and theory in the 1980s, historians began to question the impartial and neutral role of archives and archivists in preservation practices (McKemmish 2006, 19). This methodological shift from archive-as-source to archive-as-subject was propelled by emerging deconstructivist texts. Among these were Michel Foucault's text *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), in which he explores processes through which knowledge and archives are produced and conditioned by the epistemologies of stakeholders, as well as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988), where she probes absences and silences of subaltern voices within colonial, nationalist, and Marxist historiographies.

Inspired by postmodern thinkers and subaltern studies, historians concerned with colonialism began to write "popular histories" of resistance; in the archives, scholars "read against the grain" and located "human agency in small gestures of refusal and silence among the colonised" (Stoler 2002a, 99; Hamilton, Harris, and Reid 2002, 12). Luise White summarises the evolution of African social historiography thought during this period succinctly:

For at least twenty-five years those of us who studied African social history and sought to rescue ordinary Africans from the condescension of the present... [we] boasted that we did not need the linguistic turn to interrogate archives [because] we'd been reading against the grain for years. Ever since the history of colonial Africa separated itself from imperial histories, we have tasked ourselves with the most critical of readings, with refracting what we read, with going against the grain or reading the grain but always at odds with the master narratives with which documents were conceived and written. And because of our judicious reading, we prided ourselves on using the writings of the people who got it wrong to get it right (2015, 309-310).

Above, White's reference to "going against the grain or reading the grain" is in reference to the work of Ann Laura Stoler, who urged scholars to pause at, to reflect, and uncover conventions that make up colonial archives' unspoken order, reading along rather than against the grain (2002a, 100-103; 2002b, 91-92). Stoler (2002a, 100) asks:

How can students of colonialisms so quickly and confidently turn to readings "against the grain" without moving along their grain first? How can we brush against them without a prior sense of their texture and granularity? How can we compare colonialisms without knowing the circuits of knowledge production in which they operated and the racial commensurabilities on which they relied?

Stoler further argues for the importance of the personal in colonial archives, as colonial conversations on health and hygiene, entertainment, sexuality, housekeeping, childcare, work progression, and education reveal a great deal about colonial conventions and ways of thinking (Stoler 2002a, 100; Stoler 2002b, 91-92).

In 2015 and 2016, I conducted archival research at the Public Records and Archive Department (PRAAD) in Accra, and subsequently visited regional archival offices in Kumasi and Tamale. During my time in these archives, I heeded Stoler's call to consider the processes through which the archive is produced (Stoler 2002a, 101). My first encounter with the archives was their searchable database: documents in the PRAAD archive are only searchable through large paper catalogues, and often lack descriptions beyond the title and date. Files are given vague titles like "Town Planning" or "Notes" that provide little detail about each folder's content. Such systems require the researcher to "dig deeper", working through large files that often have little significance to one's project. Albeit a laborious task, wading through materials that fall outside the scope of one's project aids in developing broader insights into political, economic, and social histories of the region.



Figure 5 PRAAD's Tamale Office

Caption: Documents requested one morning in 2015, photo taken at Tamale regional archives

As Achille Mbembe suggests, documents that arrive in archives are coded and classified, distributed according to chronological, thematic, and geographic criteria (Mbembe 2002, 19). While flipping through the searching aids at each regional archive, I noticed how each location housed different kinds of material, concerning vastly different topics. At the national archive in Accra, I encountered materials on film and trade through a federal lens, such as film censorship board review notes and import trade records, and even a catalogue of Kwame Nkrumah's personal film collection. Kumasi offered the most information on Sindhi, Lebanese, and Syrian merchants in the colonial Gold Coast, a puzzling find considering that far more merchants lived in Accra. Tamale's archive was rich in material of the late colonial and early post-colonial periods, with a substantial portion of the archive's records ranging from 1940-1975. The archive offered a wealth of data on urban planning projects, especially those concerning Tamale's cinemas in the early post-colonial period, revealing post-colonial anxieties about the underdevelopment of the town, and subsequent interventions in the modernisation of Ghana's north under the CPP.

African history is an interdisciplinary field, and as such, scholars draw on multiple methods, consulting linguistic, archaeological, ethnographic, genealogical, oral performative, and oral-interview evidence (Cooper 2005, 191). Oral history has become a particularly popular method for African historians, gaining traction with the rise of portable recording technology in the mid-1940s (*ibid*, 192). Oral histories are conducted by the researchers, as they ask living individuals about certain events, moments, communities, and experiences from the past. Barbara Cooper defines oral histories succinctly as "personal reminiscence solicited by the researcher in an interview format" (*ibid*). For postcolonial historians, the turn towards oral history offered innovative ways to "give voice to what was left out of the archival record" (White 2015, 316). Oral history interviews cast new light on underexplored areas of daily life, as researchers supplement biases and gaps in documentary evidence through conversations with women, minorities, informal workers, and community leaders (Cooper 2005, 192; Portelli 1998, 67). As Cooper suggests of African history, oral histories stand to both valorise and make accessible "the rich local knowledge of Africans about their own worlds" (2005, 206).

Just as written text must be read both along and against the grain, oral histories must be explored as "social production of memory, self, and subjectivity" (*ibid*, 207). Oral histories reveal how "people articulate subjective experiences about the past through the prism of the present" (Abrams 2010, 21). Allesandro Portelli (1998, 67)

posits that “oral sources tell us not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did”, revealing less about the events themselves, and more about people’s memories, refracted through subsequent experiences, life events, and perspectives. Like written archival material, oral history is imprecise and inconsistent; as Kofi Agawu (2003, 25) puts it: “the written is not better than the oral in itself. Rather, oral and written accrue value within a larger economy of knowledge contestation.”

Many ethnomusicologists openly employ oral history as method, working to “elaborate memories in and about musical performance [from] the past” (Shelemay 2006, 18). Regardless of some ethnomusicologists’ wariness of oral history as method (Booth 2008, 10-11), oral history literature stands to strengthen the ethnographic work of ethnomusicologists who engage with musical pasts. If ethnomusicologists think of oral history as African historians do, as a process in which researchers solicit personal reminiscences from their research participants, most ethnomusicologists already employ oral history during their interviews, be it recent or more distant pasts.

Another key source of evidence for historians is oral tradition, including storytelling and musical performance. Akin to other critical engagements with historical text, African historians read oral traditions as “a thoroughgoing exploration of the constellation of performance genres in which the given text is embedded” (Cooper 2005, 203). In West African societies, drummers are often known as “keepers” of local history. For example, in Mande communities, griots are considered genealogists and arbiters, often described as “singer-historians” who maintain an extensive intergenerational repertoire of oral histories (Counsel 2016, 547-548). The same has been said in Dagbon: drummers, praise singers, poets, and linguists carry a great deal of historical knowledge with them, acting as court historians, recorders of genealogy, and mediators in political disputes (Agawu 2003, 25; Oppong 1973, 54; Oppong 1969, 42). Of course, just like oral history and archival documentation, the histories performed by praise singers and drummers are inconsistent and imprecise. Some drummers use their perceived legitimacy and authority as a platform to construct histories conducive to their own social and/or political desires (MacGaffey 2013, 36). It is exciting to think that in future, ethnomusicologists and cultural anthropologists might collaborate with historians to explore the performing arts as an alternative form of historical evidence.

Collective Remembering: Memoirs, Biographies, Newspapers, and Private Collections

The archives comprise only part of the available written material of the late colonial and early post-colonial period. Scholars also engage in popular literature such as memoirs, biographies, auto-biographies, stories, and anecdotes to illuminate social histories (Caron 2011, 172). Away from the traditional archives, I have consulted memoirs and biographies, as well as stories found in newspapers, trade journals, and magazines, mostly from the late 1950s through to the 1980s. Drawing on collective sources such as these can be “open ended and profoundly interdisciplinary”, provoking a diverse community, less bounded by notions of “expertise” such as in state archives (Jenkins 2006 50-53; see also Lévy 1997 and Walsh 2003).

Biographies, auto-biographies, and memoirs detail life stories and histories that often disrupt more commonly held narratives about an event or occasion.⁵⁷ In my research, I consulted multiple biographies and memoirs, including: Paul Adamson’s (2007) memoir about his experiences as a Swiss banker in Ghana; former president John Dramani Mahama’s (2012) memoir, which includes his childhood in Tamale and experiences of the 1979 and 1981-1982 coups in Ghana; and John Miller Chernoff’s 2003 and 2005 biographies of Hawa, charting one woman’s coming of age story in 1970s and 1980s Ghana. Such literature provides in-depth insights into the music, dance, and film cultures of Tamale residents in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. These sources reveal anecdotal evidences that texture untold histories, such as postcolonial popular music in Northern Ghana, or the growing popularity of Hindi films in Tamale during the post-colonial period. At the same time, biographies and memoirs have biases that must be considered: as authors often write their biographies or memoirs years after the event, they may be subsequently informed by a broad range of sources, and their memories are likely to be skewed over time (Cooper 2010, 257). Biographies and memoirs also take creative licence, and can be subject to selective memory, self-censorship, and exaggeration (Burton 2005, 20; McCollum and Hebert 2014b, 49; Ochonu 2015, 294). Scholars must read these sources in the same way as colonial archival material, both along and against the grain, conscious of the factors that produce memories and silences in personal recollections (Cooper 2010, 257- 265).

⁵⁷ While autobiographies are non-fiction literature written by the individual whose life story is being told, biographies can be written by someone else, such as a researcher or journalist. Memoirs are akin to autobiographies, though they take on the conventions and creative licenses of fiction writing throughout.

In comparison to archival methods, far less has been written about the use of newspapers as historical source, especially in the context of postcolonial African historiographies. This is surprising, as in the context of postcolonial media histories, newspapers are often the only available written source on certain events and topics. I have drawn on newspapers as key sources for topics including social entertainment, such as cinema listings and film reviews, as well as editorials on Tamale's rapid urbanisation.⁵⁸ Much of this information is available in Ghanaian newspapers housed at the British Library, including the *Ashanti Pioneer*, the *Daily Graphic*, the *Ghanaian Times*, *Sunday Mirror*, and the *African Morning Post*. As a source, newspapers have various strengths as well as biases that should be considered when used in scholarly work. Besides offering insight into aspects of everyday social life, newspapers provide longer-term records of historical processes not available elsewhere (Franzosi 1987, 14). For example, I have worked through several decades of cinema listings to get a sense of how the commercial film business changed in Ghana over the late colonial and early post-colonial period.⁵⁹ Newspapers also offer narrations of events closest to the time they happened, an arguably ideal source for historians seeking initial responses to events (Baumgartner 1981, 256). On the other hand, the material in newspapers is selective: journalists do not report all events, and the events covered are chosen based on journalistic norms, editorial concerns, and what is considered "newsworthy", sensational, and sellable within the media attention cycle, as well as the interests of proprietors, both private and state (*ibid*; see also Earl et al. 2004, 67; Franzosi 1987, 6).

In the context of post-colonial Ghana, the biggest point of consideration when using newspapers as source is the history of state censorship. Many newspaper articles used in this thesis are drawn from the *Daily Graphic*, the *Ghanaian Times*, or the *Ashanti Pioneer*, all of which were censored by the CPP during the early post-colonial period. Following Nkrumah's Africanisation of Ghana's press, the CPP viewed British owned the *Daily Graphic* as a "relic of colonialism" (Anokwa 1998, 10-11). Nkrumah subsequently established the *Ghanaian Times* in 1958 to challenge the dominance of

⁵⁸ Though I found newspaper cinema listings useful in knowing what kinds of films were available during the post-colonial period, newspapers did not always reflect everything that was happening at the cinema hall. Gareth McFeely notes how Indian films lacked the same kind of comprehensive publicity materials as other films in the region, and were thus often absent from newspaper advertisements in the 1950s, despite their being shown on cinema screens from the mid-1950s onwards (McFeely 2015, 292).

⁵⁹ These newspapers list film shows on nearly every day of every year, making clear the kinds of Hindi films available in Ghana from the mid-1950s to the late 1980s. I used these cinema listings to construct my own database of films screened in Ghana, of which I have five thousand entries. This personal database has become an invaluable source in comparing ethnographic performances of Hindi film songs detached from the original film title. While individuals seemingly remember full Hindi film songs, they are often unable to remember the titles of each song's "parent film", and through this database, I am able to better guess the potential soundtracks these songs are from.

the *Daily Graphic* and to serve as the ideological mouthpiece of the CPP regime (*ibid*). Four years later, the CPP took full control of the *Daily Graphic*; likewise, the *Ashanti Pioneer*, a privately owned paper established in Kumasi in 1939, was subjected to official censorship in 1962 (*ibid*, 12).⁶⁰ Nkrumah's uninterrupted rule ended in 1966 with a *coup d'état*, ushering in an era of continually alternating civilian and military rule, with subsequent leaders who also employed strict censorship over newspapers (*ibid*, 5). While engaging with newspapers for my research, I remained aware of the ways in which state censorship changed and shaped journalistic accounts of events. For example, the near obsession with documenting Tamale's urban development in the *Ghanaian Times* reflects postcolonial political anxieties and desires to bring underdeveloped regions "up to speed" with the rest of a rapidly urbanising country, while a complete lack of reports on violence in newspapers during the years of Rawlings' *coup* are also indicative of state endorsed censorship.

Another noticeable bias in Ghanaian newspapers is their Southern focus: the *Daily Graphic* and the *Ghanaian Times* were published in Accra, while the *Ashanti Pioneer* was published in Kumasi, with very few articles written by Northern journalists. During my fieldwork in 2016, I sought out copies of newspapers published in Tamale, including the *New Ghanaian* and the *Northern Advocate*, both of which were not accessible in archives within or outside of Ghana. I was unable to locate the *New Ghanaian*, though I did manage to read portions of the *Northern Advocate*, a paper established in the 1990s which continues to publish periodically today.⁶¹ This paper offers unique perspectives on life in Tamale: articles are written by those living in the city, and many stories centre around local or regional issues.

Along with archival material and newspaper articles, I consulted trade journals and magazines from the post-colonial period. Like memoirs, these sources are filled with anecdotes about the influence of Hindi films in Ghana's cinemas. Take for example the 1965 publication of the Indian trade journal *Automobile India*, where Sharan Gupta reports back to colleagues in India following a business trip to Ghana about his experiences watching Hindi films in Accra (1965, 28-30). In February 1986, a

⁶⁰ As the only remaining major Ghanaian newspaper to not experience state ownership, the *Ashanti Pioneer*'s city editor was detained for "destructive criticism" of Nkrumah's CPP government, and Nkrumah subsequently appointed a government official to the editorial board of the paper (Anokwa 1998, 12).

⁶¹ I located this newspaper by contacting the newspaper's editor, Alhassan Imoro, via the Information Services department in Tamale. Imoro took me to the newspaper's office and generously allowed me to look through the copies he had kept.

West African arts-based newspaper, *Talking Drum*, features a journalist's nostalgic recollection of his time as a youth attending Indian films in the Zongo between the 1960s and the 1980s (Akumanyi 1986). Across the border in Ouagadougou, Gilbert Ilboudo (1962) details the popularity of Indian cinema in French West Africa, shedding light on the broader trends of cinemagoers in this period. The *Ghana Yearbooks* from 1958 to 1966, housed at the British Library and SOAS in London, feature detailed lists of cinema businesses, projector rentals, and film distribution networks. Though these journals reveal a wealth of information regarding cinemas in early post-colonial Ghana, they must be read critically, engaging with the biases of journalists and international business owners, whose gender, class, and background shape their observations.

Outside of traditional archives, personal collections of photographs, notes, and business records provide unique insights into the cinema going experiences of the post-colonial period as well. In 2015, I met with the Captan family, former owners of many of Ghana's cinema halls during the late colonial and early post-colonial period. Though they held on to various documents regarding their cinema businesses, including ticket sales and advertisements, the materials had been thrown away in a recent move, as the nearly sixty-year old documents had gone largely untouched. In other encounters with former cinema management in Tamale, I was told that the former Rivoli cinema building had collapsed sometime in the late 1990s, and during the collapse, boxes of information stored in the building were similarly lost.⁶² There are rare instances where cinema records are preserved, as was the case in Laura Fair's (2010, 93) experience in Tanzania, when one cinema owner preserved a receipt book detailing twenty years of cinema ticket sales. I was successful in finding one document in a scrapbook at the British Library that details the fees for film rentals in Ghana for 1961,⁶³ though for the most part I was unsuccessful in accessing similar kinds of materials elsewhere.⁶⁴

Akin to the private collections of business owners, many private photograph collections in Tamale have been destroyed or lost. I encountered several private

⁶² The Rivoli in Tamale has now been turned into the Indian-owned department store chain, Melcom.

⁶³ This document has provided insight into profits made by cinema business owners in the early post-colonial period. See *Dean & Pearl Exhibition Rates for Ghana: A Leaflet of Cinema Statistics*. 1961. British Library Shelfmark 85/Cup.600.b.2.

⁶⁴ Unlike traditional archives in Ghana, which occasionally receive governmental or international funding and support for preservation, documents housed in private collections are at a higher risk of destruction, deterioration, and misplacing. This brings into question the processes of selection concerning what is and is not included in a colonial, state, or institutional archive, and the opportunities and funds afforded to personal collections (Burton 2005, 8; Mbembe 2002, 20; Stoler 2002a, 98). There is also a question of accessibility, as some private collectors are protective of their material, and choose to withhold their collections from public access.

photograph collections in Tamale, such as that of a former cinema manager, that included a photo of the Rivoli cinema in Tamale taken sometime during the 1960s. Jeet, a friend and photographer in Tamale allowed me to look through his photo albums, which included photos of Indian merchants working and living in Tamale in the 1970s. Beyond personal collections, I found photographs of Tamale at the Basel Mission image archives in Switzerland, including images of Tamale from the 1920s and 1930s; these photographs provide a sense of the town's size and atmosphere during the colonial period. Finally, I found images of Tamale in newspapers at the British Library. For example, one newspaper article (the *Ghanaian Times* ' "Focus on Tamale" ' from 9th June 1962) offers images of the regional commissioner's office, the building of Ward I, Tamale central hospital, the public library, and the opening of Ghana Senior High school (now Ghanasco). These news spreads provide pictorial evidence of the ways in which new colonial governments layered development projects onto late colonial urban planning schemes, while also making clear the kinds of access certain communities had to markets and cinemas.⁶⁵ In each instance, the kinds of photographs taken and the way in which they are taken is based on the perspective of the photographer. This has important implications in colonial photography, where for example, images of urban life or of citizens in Western dress are likely to have been avoided.

Exploring Sound Archives

Researchers concerned with postcolonial Africa face great difficulties in sourcing written or recorded materials. As White puts it, the question shifts from "how to read inaccurate or inconsistent archives" to "how to find any archive at all" (2015, 309). This is particularly true for music and dance historians, as performative arts of the post-colonial era were often not documented through written or pictorial evidences, and are thus not usually included in official archives. As my research concerns music, I was interested to know what music sounded like in early post-colonial Tamale: what were people listening to within and outside the cinema hall in the early days of cinema in Tamale? Were musicians performing outside of the cinema, and if so, what did it sound like? To answer these questions, my first methodological instinct was to seek out those who were around at the time, and ask them first-hand. This proved impossible, as those born in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s have passed away. As Ruth Stone notes, it is

⁶⁵ An art gallery exhibit featuring historic photographs from Tamale, titled "Northern Ghana Life" travelled through Ghana in 2018. Though I have not been to see it, they are planning to publish a book of historic photographs from Tamale as well.

impossible to engage directly with the dead, and as not all performances are recorded and preserved, it becomes difficult to discern what music of the past sounded like (2008, 186).

My next methodological approach was to find any music recorded in Tamale during the 1960s and 1970s. During my research, I approached institutional sound archives, private collection holders in Tamale, and contacted ethnomusicologists who had worked and recorded music in Tamale in the past. Initially, I approached two major sound archives in Accra: The University of Ghana's J.H. Kwabena Nketia sound archive, and the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation's (GBC) Gramophone Library. My first visit to the J.H. Kwabena Nketia sound archive was in 2013, when it was a newly designated sound archive in the African Studies Department of the University of Ghana. Since then, New York University's Audio-visual preservation exchange programme sponsored an audio-visual preservation and digitisation lab in August 2014. I have subsequently visited the archive in 2015, 2016, and 2018 to listen to their extensive collection of materials, including recordings from some of Nketia's own fieldwork trips. I found several relevant recordings, including a speech concerning the use of recorded music in homes in Northern Ghana from 1959, discussed in Chapter Five. While the archive has been useful in my research, issues of access make it difficult to contextualise certain recordings. Unlike traditional "papered" archives in Ghana, where one can pay a fee to take a photograph of documents, there are restrictions on taking copies of recordings outside the archive, and this makes it difficult to reflect upon or compare archival recordings with other recordings or to share with other musicians who may recognise the musicians in these recordings.⁶⁶

The Gramophone Library at the GBC offers a substantial collection of materials recorded by the government during the early post-colonial period, as well as any collections brought in by other musicians as well as by families of deceased musicians. The library has been in operation since the 1950s, and underwent new safeguarding measures via the 2008 project "Digitize, Archive and Safeguard the Gramophone Library of the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation", a joint venture between GBC and The Centre for World Music at the University of Hildesheim in Germany. Significant to my research, the Gramophone Library houses a small collection of Hindi film soundtrack records which were broadcast on the GBC in the late colonial and early post-colonial

⁶⁶ For example, some of the performers on recordings in the archive were not clearly identified. If I had had the chance to play this recording to friends and musicians in Tamale, they might have been able to identify the song and performer themselves.

periods. Though many recordings were available to listen to, others were missing, as a significant portion of audio-visual material stored at the GBC was destroyed in a fire in 1985. There are significant gaps in GBC's live recorded programmes from the post-colonial period as well, and this was detrimental to my research, as key programmes of interest, including the Hausa women's hour programmes were missing altogether.⁶⁷

Another source for sound recordings is from private archives. For example, in his research on Indian *taarab*, Andrew Eisenberg consulted the private archives of a local Indian business owner, where he obtained “digital copies of rare Swahili music recordings published between 1930s and the 1970s – leftover stock from Mombasa's Indian-owned Assanand and Sons, which closed up shop in the 1970s” (2017, 339). In my own research, I found private collections to be far more valuable than state archives when seeking recordings of recreational musical performances from Tamale. This is partly because early post-colonial government agents focused their national music recording projects in Ghana's South, seldom recording Northern Ghanaian musicians. To fill the void of Northern Ghanaian artists heard on the radio, local entrepreneurs in Tamale purchased cassette recording devices in Nigeria in the 1970s, where they regularly travelled for trade. Upon return to Northern Ghana from Nigeria, these traders began to record local music in Tamale. Throughout the late 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, hundreds of cassettes were recorded of local folk and popular music performances in Tamale. Musicians recorded were either locally renowned artists from Northern Ghana, such as Albela, Fuseini Tia, and Bombay Simpa, as well as travelling musicians from the Sahelian region of West Africa, including well-known artists from Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Northern Ghana, such as Kilbua artists, and Manman Barika. Recordings feature examples of various musical genres from the region, including Simpa, Kilbua, and Atikatika songs.

Today, these locally recorded cassettes are available in the homes and storage units of the recordists, who live in retirement in Tamale. Owners allowed me to look at their various private cassette collections of locally recorded musicians in working condition. Although these recordists have been careful to maintain and protect their collections from degradation, the cassettes are at high risk of deterioration and

⁶⁷ In an effort to curb the loss of recorded programmes during the post-colonial period, programme officers began to hide their recordings behind desks and in drawers of their offices. These materials have not since been classified or preserved, and it is now difficult to parse through hundreds of unlabelled tapes to discern what content is actually inside. These materials face pressing preservation issues, as when older broadcasters retire or pass away, their tapes are scattered in corridors by new staff, and sometimes thrown away.

destruction, as magnetic tapes are vulnerable to physical and chemical breakdown over time (Gibson 1996). Moreover, the cassette collections are owned by those in retirement, and there is risk that the information they have regarding the materials will be lost if they become sick and pass away, as was the case with one of the collection owners, Abdul-Kadir Alidu, in January 2017.

As well as local recordings, another resource is the private and public field recording collections of early ethnomusicologists. I have encountered recordings of women's music in Tamale made by Verna Gillis in 1976, available online through Folkways,⁶⁸ as well as the accompanying cassette for John Miller Chernoff's 1979 book, *African Rhythm and African Sensibility* (Chernoff 1981, track 39).⁶⁹ I first struggled to listen to this accompanying cassette, as copies housed at University of London libraries were inaudible, a result of cassette deterioration. I eventually contacted Chernoff personally and asked to listen to his recording, and he generously allowed me to listen to several recordings from his private collection. As well, I visited ethnomusicologist John Collins' personal music collection at Bokoor studio in Accra in the hope that he may have recordings from his 1974 trip to Tamale and Yendi, discussed in his 1985 book, *Musicmakers of West Africa*. Unfortunately, much of his collection was destroyed in a flood in 2011.

In recent years, new alternative methods for "hearing the past" in West African music has developed out of the new World Music 2.0 industry. World Music 2.0 is an echo of the earlier world music industry of the 1990s, that largely focused on "authentic" African music, discussed in more detail in Steven Feld's article "A Sweet Lullaby for World Music" (2000, 148). Rather than focusing on "authentic" West African music, World Music 2.0 comprises record collectors and DJs who travel to West African countries to find old funk and soul music from 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.⁷⁰ Record diggers, the main agents in promoting World Music 2.0, have recently been present in regions throughout West Africa, paying people for their collections of niche

⁶⁸ <https://folkways.si.edu/traditional-womens-music-from-ghana-ewe-fanti-ashanti-and-dagomba/world/album/smithsonian>

⁶⁹ An alternative to institutional archives in Ghana are archives developed from personal collections that are open to the public by appointment. Examples include the Ghana Highlife Museum in Cape Coast and the Bokoor African Popular Music Archives Foundation in Accra.

⁷⁰ I understand World Music 2.0's marketability as part of a new generation's re-engagement with West African popular music that was left untouched by ethnomusicologists and music industries of World Music "1.0." As Claude Lévi-Strauss outlines in an exploration of history and anthropology: "both [historians and ethnographers have been] concerned with societies other than the one in which [they] live. Whether this otherness is due to remoteness in time or to remoteness in space...is of secondary importance compared to the basic similarity of perspective" (Lévi-Strauss *et al.* 1963, 16).

West African popular music vinyls.⁷¹ Once purchased, record diggers sample this music at clubs and dance halls in Europe and North America.⁷² Scant attention has been paid to methodological concerns or issues of repatriation, explored in more depth in museum studies or archival literature. There is thus debate surrounding the ethics of record digging: do European and American collectors profit from collecting older African vinyl from their owners, and do original recording artists or their estates receive compensation when vinyl is sold or played abroad at major clubs?⁷³

In 2017, music and media scholar Abigail Gardner wrote a piece on record diggers, in which she argues that this kind of collecting “feeds into a DJ’s sub-cultural capital, whereby unknown African tracks bestow respect within a dance culture that has always fetishised obscurity” (Gardner 2017). She echoes sentiments of Walter Benjamin (2010), who himself viewed the collecting of foreign material as an act of control, imposing a certain kind of order onto the world. Record digger Frank Gossner, who has travelled to Ghana on record digging trips, refutes such sentiments, arguing that the collection of “mass produced media” like vinyl records is different from other kinds of collecting, such as more “valuable” unique older recordings (Paz 2011). The digging practice impedes historical music research in the region, as important vinyl collections can be missing altogether. For example, though I was told in many interviews about the popularity of Hindi film songs on vinyl, I could never find these records. One man who used to own some Hindi film records said that they had been bought by record diggers visiting the city.

⁷¹ Frank Gossner, a German DJ, travels to West Africa collecting LPs and reissuing them in order to use them at gigs, and Brian Shimkovitz, owner of Awesome Tapes from Africa records, collects and reissues cassettes from West Africa. Both Gossner and Shimkovitz have been to Tamale. For information on Gossner, see <http://www.dustandgrooves.com/digging-in-ghana-with-frank-gossner/>; For information on Shimkovitz, see http://www.thewire.co.uk/in-writing/essays/collateral-damage_awesome-tapes-from-africa_s-brian-shimkovitz.

⁷² Christopher Kirley travels to West Africa in order to record and reissue recordings from Sahelian regions of West Africa for his record label, Sahelian Sounds. For information, see www.sahelsounds.com.

⁷³ Some diggers, like Frank Gossner, do make efforts to contact musicians and original artists with copies of their records, and make sure that original artists or label owners are paid where possible.



Figure 6 Record Digger's Poster

Caption: Image of a Record Digger's poster in Tamale, Ghana in July 2016

Aside from record diggers, there are examples of ethnomusicologists and sound archivists working with private music collections in West Africa, creating alternative platforms for access to music collections in the region. Graeme Counsel's archival work in Guinea exemplifies this: during research trips to Guinea, Counsel purchased a variety of Syliphone recordings, music produced through the state following Guinea's Independence from France, from private owners he met through research. As documented in the recent book, *From Dust to Digital*, Counsel subsequently worked on a project funded by the British Library's Endangered Archive Programme to build an entire catalogue of Syliphone records, in an effort to make them available at the Radio Télévision Guinée offices in Conakry (2016, 547-586 and 567). The Ghana Highlife Museum in Cape Coast and John Collins' Bokoor African Popular Music Archives Foundation in Accra are additional examples of such private collections.

Beyond recorded sound, what can be done when there is no recording, or a recording has been destroyed? As both Bhekizizwe Peterson (2002) and Katherine Butler Schofield (2015) suggest, historical ethnomusicologists can bring together material from various archives in order to produce "stereophonic understandings of the past", through descriptions of musical sound, found in the notes of vinyl records or notes found in papered archives.⁷⁴ Schofield posits that part of producing a "stereophonic understanding of the past" includes listening to descriptions of musical sound (Schofield 2015). This method was useful in my own research when exploring the life history of the musician Albela who passed away a year before I began my fieldwork. Albela is well known in Tamale for taking Hindi film song melodies and changing the lyrics to Dagbani, singing extended folk songs to the tune of a Hindi film song melody. During my fieldwork trip to Tamale in 2016, I travelled to Yendi, where Albela was born, to find and speak with his family about his life and music. In conversations with his brothers and friends, they described some of the musical instruments Albela used, such as a water jug turned upside down for a drum and a toy flute. Later in his career, Albela made his own drums to replicate the drum played during the musical performance for "Goron Ki Na Kalon Ki Duniya Hai Dilwalon Ki" in *Disco Dancer* (1982). To do so, Albela hollowed out the wood from a tree he cut, combined with sheep leather sewn on top, that sounded markedly different from locally

⁷⁴ Collecting "different kinds of evidences [that] construct sounds of the past" can be difficult (McCollum and Hebert 2014b, 36), especially as state archives privilege and preserve written materials over other formats (Mbembe 2002, 20).

made drums such as the *lunga*.⁷⁵ Descriptions of musical performances or instruments recalled by family members or friends are another way to engage with musical pasts.⁷⁶

Ethnography

Combined with historical methods, such as archival research and work in sound archives, I have engaged with a variety of ethnographic research methods during fieldwork. Firstly, I have conducted interviews with friends, musicians, filmmakers, and those I met in the communities where I lived. Interviews are a common methodological tool in anthropological research, and encompass several approaches, including structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interview styles, all of which serve different purposes depending on the researcher's goals. Structured interviews require more specific and predetermined questions, with less room for interviewees to deviate from questions and explore personal anecdotes or experiences in depth. Unstructured interviews have less definition in terms of questions and ultimately afford more freedom and control to the interviewee to direct and guide the conversation (Mannik and McGarry 2017, 73). A semi-structured approach blends the two methods, providing some specific questions but also giving the interviewee room to guide the conversation (*ibid*). Interviews can elicit oral histories, gather musical knowledge from cultural insiders, and help to build rapport between interviewer and interviewee (Rice 2014, 31).

Because my research engaged with various specific and concentrated communities in Tamale (including filmmakers, radio fan clubs, elderly DJs and recordists, the Lebanese community, and Tijani religious community), I was less concerned with amassing large amounts of data from sample groups, and more interested in learning about individual experiences through frequent meetings with open-ended conversations. As musicologist Jane W. Davidson (2004, 61) writes:

In open-ended questioning, the interviewer needs to know the interview topic areas very well and be prepared to go along with the flow of a conversation from one topic to the next at the participant's pace...he or she needs to pursue areas that may emerge spontaneously in the interview.

⁷⁵ Interview with several of Albela's family members in Yendi on 28 October 2016.

⁷⁶ In his work on Indian *taarab*, Eisenberg employs similar methods. He writes that to "reconstruct the history of Indian *taarab*" he conducted interviews with musicians and aficionados of Indian *taarab* (2017, 338).

In many of my interviews, my prepared interview questions would quickly dissolve into informal conversations, allowing more freedom for the informant to guide the course of the interview (Dziekan *et al.* 2013, 48). Through these encounters, I embraced a dialogic model, seeking to engage in fluid conversations wherever possible (Clifford and Marcus 1986, 245; Sarkar 2012, 580). The majority of my interviews were conducted in this way, and as a result yielded unexpected perspectives and new accounts of historical musical performances in the region. In order to conduct informal interviews of this nature, I would tell the person I was interviewing about the general topics or themes I wanted to explore (such as the history of the cinema in Tamale) and ask broad questions that quickly moved towards topics the interviewee wanted to discuss in more depth. At the end of an interview, I would ask if they had anything else they would like to add; often these moments were the most illuminating. Given the spontaneity and sporadic nature of these interviews, I had to be able to respond to quite a diverse set of topics and frames of reference. My time researching in the British Library and the PRAAD archives in Accra, Kumasi, and Tamale afforded an awareness of some key moments in Tamale's history that aided in these broad and open-ended interviews.

Interviews are, of course, situational. In my experience, unstructured and open-ended interviews tended to “flow” better than structured interviews for my research purposes. However, I sometimes conducted more structured interviews, typically if interviews were one-off meetings. I had several instances where interviewees preferred structured interviews, especially those who worked in academic circles. For example, one former cinema manager in Tamale requested specific listed questions, which I gave him prior to the interview. Interestingly, despite his request for a structured interview with specific listed questions, he went on lengthy tangents throughout the interview, revealing a rich history of cinema in Tamale. There are several other interview styles I did not use, such as focus groups, which I trialled but found to be frustrating as one participant would often speak over others in the group. I did not use surveys as method, as my questions were more specific to each individual, though music scholar Dominik Phyfferoen (2012) has employed surveys in Tamale to gain a sense of broader musical trends and tastes in the city.

Many ethnomusicologists engage in participant observation during their fieldwork. For some, participant observation means learning an instrument, dance, or performance practice, while for others, it may be helping to plan or organize an event, or working as a music teacher in a school. Ruth Stone defines participant observation

as an “approach to research involving varying degrees of observation and participation in a cultural setting” (2015, 12-13). Rice describes participant observation as encompassing a variety of activities, including hanging out with musicians in their daily lives, going to gigs, rehearsing, and performing (2014, 34). Participant observation is often defined in broad terms, as the method itself varies greatly depending on the situation and context.

I participated directly in my research in three ways: first, I was a dancer and singer in various music videos and films in the Tamale film industry; second, I participated in practices and performances for the *mawlid*, and third, I attended meetings for the Indian film fan club in Tamale.⁷⁷ Through learning to perform in each of these situations, I gained new perspectives on the music I was studying, illuminating musical processes, pedagogical methods, aesthetic choices or preferences, and restrictions on who can perform and why. Over time, I began to realise the significance of what Mantle Hood (1960) termed bi-musicality, or what John Baily has more recently termed “learning to perform” (2008, 86). As Baily suggests, “learning to perform” is an important methodological tool that helps to gain insight into musical structure and overall operational aspects of music and the musical performance, but also offers insight into methods of musical training, and furthermore helps to establish bonds and friendships between researcher and musicians/performers (*ibid*, 94-96).

Part of Chapter Six is based on my involvement in the practices and performance of the *mawlid* in Tamale in 2017. During my 2016 research trip to Tamale, I got to know several Islamic school teachers who run *mawlid* performances in town. At that time, they allowed me to sit in on practices and attend one performance that year. When they invited me back to Tamale to participate in a *mawlid* event the following year, I took them up on the offer. As soon as I returned in 2017, however, I was saddened to learn that one of the school teachers had passed away, and the school’s *mawlid* performance was cancelled for the year as a sign of respect. As I had spent time with other schools in 2016, the leader of another school offered me the chance to take part in their *mawlid*. During November 2017, I attended every nightly practice for that school in Tamale, learning the repertoire and choreography for most songs. Several weeks into practising, I was asked to lead two songs. Though nervous to do so, I

⁷⁷ Participant observation had its limits during my research for Chapter Five, concerned with child-directed music in the home. As is evidenced in both Emma Brinkhurt’s (2012) and Andrew Pettit’s (2014) respective work on lullabies, it is difficult to witness lullabies as they are performed in everyday life, as the performances are both intimate and time-sensitive.

became the leader for these songs, and performed them during the final all-night performance that December.

Though I attended and observed many practices and performances in 2016, being directly involved in practices and performances in 2017 was an immersive experience, and I gained valuable insight about methods for learning songs and dances as a participant. At practices, there is no formal instruction in the songs or the dances; one is meant to learn through doing, joining one of the lines of dancers and following along with what is happening around you. Songs are learned phonetically by youth at practice, and as a newcomer you learn the songs while learning the dances. Though technically there is a lead singer at the front of the room, the drummers often drown out the sound of the lead singer, and new dancers must listen to those around them to pick up the melodies and lyrics.⁷⁸ As Sarah Pink notes, “a methodology based in and a commitment to understanding the senses provides a route to forms of knowledge and knowing not accounted for in conventional forms of ethnography” (2015, 53). My experiences in the *mawlid* offered new insights into the ways in which Hindi film songs are transmitted orally and aurally as well as bodily in the context of Islamic schools. Through my involvement, I was reminded of Connerton’s exploration of collective social memories as being sustained through the body in commemorative ceremonies (1989, 4-5).

During my time participating in the *mawlid*, I gained insight into the day to day experiences of youth participants as well; I learned about how tiring each practice is, especially for youth who were studying for school exams at the time, and how costly costumes are. I learned to develop my own individual style in dancing, as one needs to dance alone in the centre of the room during the “selection” portion of practice. I also learned the importance of fashioning oneself: on the day of the performance, I spent time with others putting on our uniforms, applying makeup, trying on glasses, and taking pictures, all aspects that I would not have experienced if I were only attending the event.

Another unexpected participatory method was my role in one of Tamale’s Indian film fan clubs. I was referred to this group during my first research trip to Tamale in October 2015, and attended meetings every Sunday I was in Tamale (and sometimes via Skype) ever since. In this group, elderly fans of Hindi films revisit

⁷⁸ Some songs do not follow a strict call and response format.

original Hindi film songs, remembering and discussing how each song speaks to their own lives, nostalgically remembering time at the cinema, and plotting attempts to “save” the youth from immoral media like hip hop, as mentioned in Chapter Two. Along with the weekly Sunday meetings, the group also has a radio show on Wednesday evenings devoted to playing songs from Hindi films. When I first encountered this group in 2015, they invited me to come to the radio station to sit in on their weekly Indian film song radio show broadcasts. This was a great opportunity to meet Indian film fans in the city and also listen to the songs that have remained most popular in the region. Over the years, the group has grown in membership and has worked to screen Hindi films at various chiefs’ palaces, as well as working towards founding their own video centre in Tamale. The fan club was a source for preliminary gatekeepers and some of the content discussed in Chapter Five is drawn from my time participating in this group (LeCompte and Schensul 1999, 89).

Finally, I became involved in two films and several music videos while researching in Tamale. My relationship with Tamale’s film industry began in October 2015, when I met one of Tamale’s most well-known actors and musicians for an interview. Upon my return in June 2016, we met again and, as a gatekeeper to the film community, he introduced me to other musicians and filmmakers. I soon learned that most popular musicians in Tamale own DVD stores near the central market, where they spend most of their time when they are not making a movie or music video. I started visiting each shop as often as I could, spending many hours and sometimes days there. As discussed in Chapter Seven, I learned a great deal about intersections of film and music industries this way, as most film directors approach musicians at these shops to write songs and perform in their movies. Musicians fold new DVD covers in their shops, and talk about their upcoming films. Customers come to buy new films or music videos, revealing the kinds of media that sell well. I met many of the key players in the film industry at these shops, and eventually began to witness musical compositions as they happened.

When I returned to Tamale in 2017 to conduct research on the *mawlid*, one filmmaker who I had known for some time contacted me and invited me to act and sing in his film.⁷⁹ As I explore in greater depth in Chapter Seven, I was asked to act in several scenes (including a musical scene) as a doctor and wife of an aid worker from Saudi Arabia. I sang a film song based on the melody from the Hindi film *Sanam Ree*

⁷⁹ I was first asked to act and was only later invited to sing in the film.

(2016), which filmmakers heard in the Indian TV series *Kum Kum Bagiya*, a popular show in Tamale at the moment. Though the few Westerners who have starred in Dagbani films in the past have played the roles of Americans on screen, Dagbani films are increasingly orienting their film productions towards discussions and explorations of the Islamic world. As such, I was dressed in order to hide my hair colour and complexion, in an attempt to create the allusion that I was from Saudi Arabia. From the way I was fashioned and cast in the film, to the process of lip-syncing in the studio, the experience of being in a film was invaluable, as I learned a great deal about how the broader social, economic, and religious changes taking place in Northern Ghana are shaping the narratives and style of Dagbani films. This example brings up questions about the ethics of the researcher's participation during research that I pick up on in more depth in Chapter Seven, when I discuss my experience working on this film.

It is a common notion, especially in American and European ethnomusicological scope, that a PhD student must spend a year or more of consecutive time “in the field” to produce strong, thought-provoking, and innovative research. Spending a year or more immersed “in the field” has its advantages, such as an ability to get to know many people within a community, or the capacity to develop language skills or learn a performance practice in depth. However, the length of time spent “in the field” does not necessarily reflect one's relative engagement with their research topic. In his important book *Representing African Music*, Kofi Agawu (2003, 42) criticises the trend in ethnomusicology to announce (and sometimes exaggerate) time spent in the field. He notes how “these small but telling mutations bespeak an anxiety over fieldwork, the ultimate source of authority, it would seem, for a certain kind of ethnomusicologist.” For him, “how much” remains a quantitative measure, indexing a length of time spent in the field but not referencing the nature or quality of the research itself (*ibid*).

The quality of research depends on other factors, such as how you spend your time, where you choose to live, who you socialise with, the kinds of questions you ask, and your relative familiarity with the region's history (including a region's economic, gendered, political, and religious history).⁸⁰ George Marcus and Judith Okely summarise the subjectivity of being “in the field” succinctly when saying:

⁸⁰ For example, with the advent of high speed internet, researchers can now easily connect with friends and family at home through online platforms, to the extent that some researchers are no longer living in the present during their ethnographic work.

The field can never be just a physical site. It is in the head, whole body, and beyond one designated locality. Too often the construction of the field as time and space bounded is the invention of those who would declassify anthropological fieldwork conducted in the West or in the anthropologists' own country (2007, 357).

Faubion, Marcus, and Fischer similarly complicate the relationship between the amount of time spent "in the field" and the overall value or strength of a project:

Good anthropology will always take time. Yet, I can see no reason for concluding that the time it takes must in every case be spent in its bulk in a physical field site...the ethical profile of the good anthropologist, in short, yields no methodological *a priori* concerning the appropriate duration of a project. Everything hinges on the terms and requirements of the question of research itself (Faubion, Marcus, and Fischer 2009, 163).

In his book, *The Art of Fieldwork* (2005), anthropologist Harry Wolcott recalls a field note written by fellow anthropologist, Paul Rabinow. While conducting research in Morocco, Rabinow explained: "Now that I am in the field, everything is fieldwork" (cited in Wolcott 2005, 58). Wolcott contends that it was Rabinow's intent, not his presence, that made everything fieldwork. He offers that "there were many others [there], but they were not in the field and they were not doing fieldwork" (*ibid*). In every instance, these researchers point towards the embodied experience of research, in which the researcher is fully immersed in their topic regardless of their location (Leibing and McLean 2007, 22). There are different ways that one finds themselves "in the field". Some researchers work within their home country or research in a region where they live permanently. Others conduct multi-sited research projects. Some take multiple trips to a region over an extended period of time, a trend that is becoming more common in ethnographic research with an increase in less expensive flights.

Though my official PhD research began in Tamale in September 2015, my time visiting and conducting research in Ghana took place over several varied trips between 2011 and 2018. I spent time in Tamale conducting ethnographic and archival research between July and August 2013, September-November 2015, July-November 2016, and November 2017-January 2018. I spent additional time in Accra in July and August

2011, May and June 2013, and October 2018.⁸¹ Repeated visits can have great advantages. One can:

observe change, incorporate a diachronic dimension into your story...search for answers to questions that may have arisen in the course of analysis, bring in a comparative perspective, and, overall, maximize the normative functions of collecting during fieldwork and cogitating outside the field (Agawu 2003, 43).

By extending my doctoral research trips across several years, I have observed changes in various musicians' and filmmakers' career developments, varying cultural trends, the advent of the internet, and the growth of internet fraud in the region, which has drastically shaped musical tastes in the city. I have also made close friends over longer periods of time, experiencing and often attending major life events such as marriages, outdoorings (birth celebrations), and funerals. During breaks between my fieldwork trips, I had time to read new material, and engage in new scholarly debates and perspectives that influenced my thinking upon subsequent returns to Tamale.

Exploring Space: Maps and Wanderings

During my research, I learned a great deal about the varying neighbourhoods and spaces that make up Tamale by engaging with historical maps of the city, and by going on soundwalks, where I recorded the acoustic environments of the city and listened to Tamale's urban soundscapes. During my archival research in Ghana and in London, I sought out maps of Tamale to see late colonial and early postcolonial urbanisation projects in Tamale through a cartographic perspective. Surprisingly, I could not find maps of Tamale in any of the PRAAD offices, nor were they available at the National Archives at Kew or the British Library. I eventually found that the only collection of maps of Tamale are housed at the National Library of Scotland in Edinburgh. I travelled to Edinburgh and took several days to study the spatial organisation of Tamale from the 1950s to the 1970s. These detailed maps helped to contextualise many of the written documents found in Tamale's regional archive, which discuss the development of new neighbourhoods, buildings, and cinemas.

One of the most revealing methods for understanding the musical makeup of Tamale was to simply walk through the city and listen. Soundwalks became an

⁸¹ My fieldwork is coupled with archival research at the British Library in London during January to May 2015, and periodically throughout my time living in London.

informative practice in my preliminary understandings of who listens to Hindi film songs and why (Pink 2015, 173-174). I noticed how different parts of the city sounded different: for example, in lower income neighbourhoods nearer the centre of town, I could hear competing Hindi film songs sounding from loudspeakers, playing from mobile phones, or used as background music for those sitting outside in the night. In contrast, in wealthier areas populated by Southern Christians, this was not the case, and the music spilling onto the streets was often gospel music. An interesting illustration of soundwalks employed as an ethnographic method comes out of Richard Vokes' research in South-Western Uganda, where he went on "radio walks" in order to understand the musical soundings of space. Vokes moved along predetermined routes designed to take him past "a range of households of different socio-economic status as well as through various public spaces, building up a record of the village soundscape by noting down all the sounds that could be heard along the way" (2007, 293).⁸² Soundwalks are a unique method in that they employ the sensory means of sound to explore the worlds that people live in (Pink 2015, 121). My soundwalks revealed new kinds of knowledge about cinema and music consumption, unpacking the intricacies and specificities of music's meaning and value dependent on socio-economic status and religion, as well as individual taste (Shiel and Fitzmaurice 2001, 8). This activity might otherwise be referred to as community mapping, where sights, sounds, and experiences of cultural consumption and wealth distribution in the urban landscape reveal new kinds of "intimate sensing in contradistinction to abstract ways of knowing" (Pinder 2005, 388).

As well as conducting soundwalks in Tamale, I also explored now-abandoned cinema halls. Such explorations provide insight into the built environment, and cinema's spatial positioning in relation to Tamale's various neighbourhoods. As Luke Bennett explains, abandoned places are open, unstructured, physical testimonies to prior lived embodied experiences (2011, 423-425). Exploring old and abandoned cinemas brought me closer to lived realities of those who attended the Victory and Rivoli cinemas in Tamale. By asking permission and gaining access to these sites, former owners and those who worked or lived near them developed interest in my research and revealed more information about the cinema. As such, the exploration of physical spaces remains a valuable method in discerning parts of Tamale's musical and mediated past (McCollum and Hebert 2014b, 38).

⁸² Similarly, Torsten Wissmann's (2014) recent research uses music as a framework for mapping fields of sound in urban environments.

Positionality

The neighbourhoods in which I lived and worked in Tamale were majority Muslim, lower-income neighbourhoods surrounding the centre of town. Most residents live below the poverty line: many only have access to water through communal taps, face inconsistent access to electricity, and use communal public toilets. Those living in these communities typically work in the informal economy, selling produce, working at the market, or as mechanics. Some of those I worked with participated in illegal activities to make a living, either by pirating films and DVDs, or through internet fraud and con schemes.⁸³ My research engaged with a range of ages, from small children up to the elderly, and I worked with both women and men. The Muslim communities I have worked with include Ahlus-Sunnah (otherwise known as “pure Sunni”) communities as well as Tijaniyya Sufi communities. I did have some brief interactions with the smaller Shia community in Tamale, but did not work with anyone in the Ahmadiyya religious community.

Although most individuals discussed in this thesis are Muslim, Tamale is still a fairly religiously mixed city. In the neighbourhood where I lived in Tamale, amongst a majority of mosques are also several gospel churches. During my time there, I have experienced very little tension between Christians and Muslims communities, an observation which has been similarly noted by ethnomusicologist Michael Frishkopf (2016, 326). That being said, I would think to be an atheist, agnostic, or even religious outside of the Abrahamic faiths in this environment might make it difficult to build rapport with more conservative members of the community, as religion is a common topic discussed on a daily basis. While there is little inter-religious tension, there is a rise in intra-religious tensions between multiple sects of Islam in Tamale, especially between the Ahlus-Sunnah and the Tijaniyya communities (*ibid*, 336). Though not apparent to passers-by, within the neighbourhoods where I worked, areas are divided based on religious, ethnic, and political lines. Typically these neighbourhoods are either religiously Ahlus-Sunnah, with people born of the Andani gate, who support the NDC party. Otherwise, the area will be majority Tijani, born of the Abudu gate, who support

⁸³ Ismaila Ceesay’s 2017 PhD dissertation details how youth in the Gambia create fake Facebook profiles and establish romantic relationships with people online in America and the UK in order to manipulate them into transferring money to their bank accounts. Several of the youth I work with in Accra and Tamale take part in similar activities, and this is part of the reason why many of my informants remain anonymous in my research.

the NPP party.⁸⁴ For example, in Salamba, the neighbourhood of the city where I lived, most Muslims aligned with the Ahlus-Sunnah sect, were born of the Andani gate, and voted for the NDC party. However in Sakasaka (just two minutes' walk away), the majority were Tijani (Sufi), born of the Abudu gate, and supported the NPP party.

My background had implications for my research: I am a white, female, Canadian researcher, who grew up in a lower middle class home. Throughout my fieldwork, my skin colour, as a marker of difference, influenced my own and others' behaviours towards me. In some cases, I was welcomed more openly into a community, and other times, I was treated with suspicion or wariness. In my research on music in the domestic sphere, my difference was often treated with suspicion. It took a great deal of time building rapport in order for families to feel comfortable inviting me into (and sometimes living in) their homes openly and freely. In contrast, my appearance and difference gained me access into the film industry quite quickly. Because there are very few foreigners in Northern Ghanaian films, I was at times considered novel, and some musicians and filmmakers asked me to be in their music videos and films because of this. At the same time, because of my difference in appearance, I was asked to dress in certain ways and play particular roles of "otherness". I was often unaware of the implications that my part in these films might have, especially in promoting particular values or views to a broad-ranging audience. I explore my positionality with regards to this in greater depth in Chapter Seven.

As Sidra Lawrence (2011, 208) writes about her fieldwork in Ghana's Upper West region, notions of whiteness or Western-ness are cultural codes mapped onto the body, slotting one into unarticulated insider/outsider dichotomies. I echo Lawrence's sentiment that "acting white" is a diffuse statement, just as "acting Dagara" or "acting Dagbamba" is similarly essentialising. Lawrence calls for the multiplicity of selfhood and possibility of plurality in discussions of both insider and outsider positions in the field (*ibid*, 218). As Ngambouk Vitalis Pemunta details, pure insider/outsider distinctions can be simplistic, and tend to freeze other differences such as gender, age, race, sexual orientation, and class. For Pemunta:

⁸⁴ In Tamale, the royal lineages are made up of two gates. This began with Na Yakubu, the king of Dagbon, who died in 1845. He had plural wives, and as a result, had two sons who wanted to be king, Abudulai and Andani. Each son became Ya Na (king) in turn, as did some of their sons. This system has resulted in conflict, with a complex colonial history beyond the scope of this work. For an in depth exploration of the matter, see Wyatt MacGaffey's (2006b) article "Death of a King, Death of the Kingdom? Social Pluralism and Succession to High Office in Dagbon, Northern Ghana."

This multiplex of identities suggests that everyone is an insider/outsider to a certain degree, which is better captured by the concept “situated knowledges” (Narayan 1993). In other words, we can only be insiders in a limited sense, not to all sectors of a community, because knowledge is relational, relative and positional and depends on one’s location within the social structure of a given community (2009, 1).

I understand other factors of my selfhood, including class, gender, faith, and age, to be influential in my research outcomes. For example, my gender was an important factor in shaping my research, influential in a region where strict gender roles are adhered to. In Tamale, opposite sex interactions between Muslim adults are highly restricted; men and women are relegated to separate, same-sex spaces in the home, and generally adhere to these arrangements in times of leisure, and in places of employment (Pellow 2011, 137). As a woman, I spent a lot of time with other women. This was both by choice but also a result of what is deemed appropriate for gendered interactions in Tamale. Typically, men would not spend time alone in a room with me, and it was often more appropriate to sit with women rather than men during social times, at performances, or during house visits. This made it difficult to become better friends with religious scholars, who spent much of their down time alone in their rooms. Though I would often bring a male friend along with me to meet with these scholars, my friend’s presence impeded my ability to build rapport with scholars, as conversations were never one-on-one. In the same vein, I faced criticism, especially by older men in the community, whenever I spent time with male friends. This tension somewhat resolved in the later years of my research, when my male friends married and had children, though the experience certainly impacted the way that some people viewed me.

Most people in Tamale spend their time with those of a similar age. Age hierarchies made it so that younger children felt they had to respect me, and this made the building of rapport with youth difficult. Participating in the *mawlid* quickly broke down these barriers, as youth became my dance and music teachers. I overcame barriers with older generations to some degree by working with the fan clubs, where I was able to become close friends with those in retirement. Besides age, many of the choices I made were read by friends and community members as indicative of class, whether or not intended: for example, I preferred walking or riding my bicycle rather than buying a car, a choice associated with lower class individuals in Tamale. My lifestyle choices (not partaking in parties, drugs, drinking) were often read as

conservative where I was staying, and this meant that certain groups of youth were less likely to spend time with me while other, more religiously minded groups welcomed me into their fold. Alongside being genuinely interested in learning more about Islam, a characteristic that certainly aided in my building friendships with many in the community, I made choices to dress modestly, wearing full-length skirts, trousers, scarves, and long-sleeved tops, all of which invited me into some social groups to the exclusion of others.

Another aspect of my positionality is my linguistic background, as I am a native English speaker. The official language of Ghana is English, however the second largest language in the country is Twi, an Akan language from the Ashanti region. Although Ghanaians throughout the country speak many different languages, including Ewe, Dagara, Dagbani, Fante, Ga and Hausa, to name only a few, most are able to speak conversational Twi whether or not it is their first language. During my MA studies from 2012-2014 at the University of Toronto, I was required to pass a language exam of my choice, and I began taking Twi lessons in order to fulfil this requirement. I continued to study Twi while in Ghana from May to August 2013, and more recently in London at the Ghana Language School from September 2015 to June 2016. In Tamale, however, people's first language is Dagbani. Many are able to speak Twi as a second language, and most men as well as younger women can speak English, though fewer older women speak English (Pellow 2011, 137).⁸⁵ I did converse with older women in Twi, though as this was a second language for both involved, it posed an even greater risk of misinterpretation. As such, I endeavoured to study Dagbani during my fieldwork from June to November 2016, and continued with conversational Dagbani in my later trip in November 2017 to January 2018. That I could only speak conversational Dagbani posed a problem, especially when conducting interviews with older women, as I required a translator to assist me with interviews in this instance. As my translators were also close friends of mine, I did try to clarify anything that seemed unclear in a translated interview afterwards. However, there are many things that can be lost in translation, including ideas, feelings, and concepts that are not easily translatable between Dagbani and English, and this was a regrettable limitation of my research.

Tamale is often colloquially referred to as the "NGO capital" of Ghana, and as such, many I met with would initially assume I was an international developmental aid

⁸⁵ Most elderly women involved in this research speak multiple languages, including Twi, Hausa, and Dagbani. Many elderly women spoke English as well.

worker. Although my research is not about development work, the long-term presence of foreign development projects in Tamale has influenced local understandings of what constitutes valuable research. My research has definitely raised eyebrows amongst charity workers regarding its applicability and developmental impact on the ground. Anthony Seeger contends that researchers must work past simple dichotomies of pure “useless” research and applied “useful” research (1996, 283). Pure and applied research can be closely intertwined. Often research that begins without practical objectives for communities can become useful and practical for communities years down the line, with profound impacts on the community members involved (*ibid*). This was the case with Aaron Corn’s ethnomusicological work in Australia, where he became part of one indigenous community’s struggle for land repatriation (2009; 2010). The findings of humanities research is often used by charities and NGOs as well, when developing new projects that require a sensitivity to issues of class and gender, for example.

One’s methodological approach is also a matter of one’s own interests, scholarly trajectory, and exposure to other academics and disciplines, and these factors are often placed outside or above the research process (Harding 2004, 73). As Mahua Sarkar notes, when one avoids such questions, they elide crucial information about how power is deployed through the selection and guiding of research questions and problems (Sarkar 2012, 580). Sandra Harding (2004) calls for researchers to acknowledge their discovery processes and unpack the values that influence and propel their projects. My gravitation towards historical methods is a reflection of a long-standing interest and exposure to Africanist historical work. Throughout various courses and seminars, my interests have been further shaped and encouraged by several Africanist scholars, including Jessica Cammaert, whose African History course on the history of capitalism in Sub-Saharan African, as well as research in Northern Ghana, motivated my initial trip to Tamale, as well as Ato Quayson and Stephen Rockel, whose African history courses during my Master’s degree shaped my engagement with the cross-sections of ethnomusicology and African history.

Ethics

Many ethics review boards base their standards of what is or is not ethical in Western quantitative notions of ethics, which is less applicable to qualitative research in the humanities, especially in areas with different cultural expectations. As David Calvey posits, research is situational, and it is important to employ ethical standards based on

what is appropriate in the context of the research environment in question (2008, 908). In my research, I have ensured that anyone who participates is aware of my project and aims, that they participate voluntarily with verbal consent, and that their confidentiality is maintained at all times. Though initially I brought written consent forms to every interview, most of those I spoke with disregarded written consent forms. This could be for a variety of reasons: many had never signed ethics documents before, and have expressed to me that they do not see the point in the document when it has been explained in person. Signing these forms can be intimidating for some, while others are suspicious of the need to sign a form to answer questions concerning cinema attendance, their favourite films, or musical practices, which appear low risk. As I detail in more depth later in the chapter, the regulations of Western ethics boards do not always equate to the ethical expectations of people in Tamale.

Most of the interviews I conducted in Tamale were with people I had known for longer periods of time. Reflecting on this, I wonder to what extent my approach was shaped by the communities where I conducted research. Writing of their research in Northern Ghana, Paulina Tindana and her colleagues (2006) write that research participants often trust their researchers to be acting in their best interest, especially when research participants have known the researcher for an extended period of time. Research participants are also more likely to trust the researcher if that person gained approval and access to the community via a gatekeeper they trust and respect (*ibid*, 1). I too found that those who consented to interviews often trusted and respected both myself and the gatekeeper who introduced me to them. An individual-based consent model, and the use of written consent documents, may be problematic in the context of Northern Ghana, where norms of decision-making do not revolve around individual autonomy (*ibid*). I heed Tindana's calls to be vigilant in working to understand community expectations, and further ensuring that those expectations are upheld and community members' trust is maintained and not exploited (*ibid*, 6).

An integral aspect of my fieldwork has been to interact with youth, especially those who have learned Hindi film songs from their parents and grandparents, and also those who took part in various *mawlid* festival practices and performances I attended in November 2016 and 2017. As Brian Williams (2006, 19-20) notes, obtaining consent from young people has become far more fluid in recent years amongst ethics review committees: rather than defaulting to parental guidance, ethics review boards have increasingly understood children as having rights, agency, and responsibilities, with the

law now limiting the power that parents have, especially over mature children. During my fieldwork, I made sure to inform youth who I worked with about my project and their participation. With few exceptions, I chose only to interview those above the age of sixteen whom I had known for a longer period of time. The only times I interviewed children under this age were those whose parents I knew very well and who were well-versed in my research project. Though this approach was what made most sense to me ethically, interviewing children through the consent of their parents and with their parents in the room was inhibiting, as children were less open about their favourite films or songs for fear of what their parents might say or think (one example being a child who did not want to admit to going to the video centre and missing school). As such, I eventually decided to forego interviews with those under the age of sixteen. There were instances when I was working with very large groups of children, with sometimes up to one hundred children in a room at a time in *mawlid* practices and in video centres.⁸⁶ In these instances, I chose only to observe the practices rather than interview youth, and gained consent from either the Islamic school teacher or the video centre owner, all of whom I had built rapport over several years. This is another instance where an individual-based consent model is ineffective, and it is more appropriate to work through a leader of a community.

When conducting ethical research, it is often expected that a researcher will compensate those who assist with research, especially with regards to translating interviews. While ethics boards may recommend financial compensation, my experience has been that giving friends cash payments for their assistance was considered rude, revealing limitations to capitalist models of compensation that do not provide for cross-cultural understandings of reciprocity. More common in Tamale is for one to help one another with skills they have, or to bring gifts to major life events (Cronk 2011, 120; Thomas 1991, 14-15). Some of my friends implied alternative ways for me to give back: many have favourite movie stars from the 1970s and 1980s they dream of getting in contact with. I have been able to contact actors that have expressed interest in writing to their fans in Tamale.⁸⁷ I have also found small gestures towards youth have gone over well, such as helping children with their homework in my downtime. Older youth have asked for assistance with revising their university and

⁸⁶ I only attended specific video centres and schools repeatedly. Initially, I explained to the leader of the business or institution about my project, and made it clear that any parents or guardians who had questions about my research could speak with me at any time, providing ample cards with my contact details to be given out when requested.

⁸⁷ For example, I found that one of the main actors from *Loha* (1987) lived in London as a photographer, and I spoke with him about the Indian fan club in Tamale.

scholarship applications. Furthermore, I have both sent gifts to friends in Tamale, and brought gifts each time I return to Tamale, continuing to seek out the nuances of mutual exchange.

Conclusion

In her historical research in Gabon, Bernault writes that:

“The narrative I ended up writing was, more than anything else, an (im)probable wandering between these isolated incidents/hearsays... True, the foundation of the story has been fed by the time-line I obtained from richer, more conventional archives, at least until the 1960s. Beyond that date, and often before it, I meandered between heterogeneous finds, whose evidence is often transnational and multi-sited, scattered in various deposits across the world” (2015, 276).

Akin to Bernault’s work, my methodology is mixed, multi-sited, and interdisciplinary. I have wandered between colonial archives, magazines, and trade journal articles, viewing these accounts as equally useful in producing a more holistic and textured account of Hindi film’s influence on music in Northern Ghana. I have participated in musical practices and performances, gone on soundwalks through Tamale, and conducted interviews with musicians and cinemagoers. For an ethnomusicologist interested in African history, this mixed-methods approach has provided an unexpected wealth of historical and contemporary data, affording a richness and depth to my research findings that would not have been possible otherwise.

The four chapters that follow explore the multiple circulations and adaptations of Hindi film songs in Tamale, revealing different social histories, including public, domestic, religious, and youth-oriented histories. Given the hodgepodge and “messy” nature of post-colonial archives, I have chosen to draw on different combinations of archival and ethnographic methodologies for each subsequent social history I detail. Chapter Four is a broad history of economic and political change in Tamale throughout the colonial and into the post-colonial period. I show how these broader infrastructural and economic shifts influenced public leisure activities in Tamale, as they made possible the growth of cinema, radio, and gramophone culture. This chapter draws most heavily on my archival work, as I use colonial and post-colonial urban planning documents as well as stories from newspapers to write a history of media in the city. Chapter Five explores the role that gramophones and radios played in domestic musical

life in post-colonial Tamale. I examine the relationship between gendered labour practices, domestic musical performance, and intergenerational experiences of Hindi film songs in the city over subsequent decades. This chapter draws on a mixture of sound archive research from the J.H. Kwabena Nketia Sound Archive and the GBC Gramophone library, alongside oral histories collected in Tamale between 2015 and 2018. In Chapter Six, I explore the reasons why Hindi film song melodies have been adopted for use in Tamale's Tijyaniyya school *mawlid* celebrations each year. To do so, I draw on a mixture of interviews with participants, teachers, and religious scholars, as well as through participant observation, drawing on my own experiences participating in *mawlid* events in 2018. Finally, Chapter Seven examines the role of Hindi film song melodies and more broadly the Hindi film song structure in the Dagbani film industry. I chart the rise of the Dagbani film industry beginning in the 1990s, and show how the melodramatic form and musical structure of Hindi films influenced the development of this Northern Ghanaian film industry. This chapter is similarly based on a combination of interviews and participant observation.

Chapter Four: A History of Media, Music, and Urban Life in Tamale, 1907-1992

Introduction

This chapter details the rise of media, including cinema, radio, and gramophone culture in Tamale, from its origins as an administrative town in 1907 until democratisation in 1992. At present, the only available scholarship discussing media history in Northern Ghana focusses on the rise of local recording and film industries following electrification in 1989 (Phyfferoen 2012, 237; Yamusah 2013, 3). By extending media's presence in Tamale back to the late colonial period, this chapter offers a new history of urban leisure in Northern Ghana. A broad and eclectic overview, I connect the rise of media in Tamale to political, economic, and social moments, events, and changes throughout the twentieth century. I show how multiple infrastructural changes encouraged an increase in international trade in Tamale during the late-colonial period, resulting in major population growth that foregrounded the introduction of media and urban leisure in the city. These changes made it so that Hindi films could circulate in Tamale. The research that follows is largely based on material sourced from the PRAAD offices in Accra, Kumasi, and Tamale, as well as extensive research in the newspaper collections at the British Library and in the photography collection of the Basel Mission image archives in Switzerland. Some information is also drawn from oral history interviews and conversations in Accra and Tamale between 2015 and 2018.

As I discussed in Chapter One, scholars in a variety of fields, including African history, ethnomusicology, and media anthropology have used art, dance, media, music, and theatre as lenses through which to explore African social histories. Especially in urban centres, the creative arts are at once deeply embedded within everyday leisure and entertainment, while at the same time influenced by various foreign records, films, and choreographies circulating from regions further afield. As such, performative arts reflect both intimate forms of social life while also being enmeshed in broader regional and transnational trade networks through which they circulate. This chapter focuses on the establishing of broader trade networks and infrastructures in Tamale, that subsequently brought Hindi film songs into social life in the city. I explore the development of “networked infrastructures”, those material forms implicated in systems of economic exchange, from railroads, cars, and airplanes, to shops and warehouses (Graham and Marvin 2001; Larkin 2008, 5-6). In his 2008 text *Signal and Noise: Media, Infrastructure, and Urban Culture in Nigeria*, Brian Larkin shows how

these infrastructures collectively and continually shape the fabric of urban life by connecting urban places in “wider regional, national, and transnational networks” (Larkin 2008, 5-6). The unique configuration of infrastructures in a city influence what kinds foreign film, music, and literature will circulate and gain purchase there (*ibid*, 5). This chapter similarly charts the growth of trade networks and infrastructures that gave rise to particular forms of media in the city. I explore how a range of infrastructural changes, including urban planning schemes, road construction projects, intercolonial migration patterns, and major political upheavals, at times curbed and at other times made possible the circulation of foreign media in the region.

Throughout this chapter, I engage with the production of social space in the colonial and post-colonial urban environment. To do so, I engage with what Henri Lefebvre calls the hyper-complexity of space (Lefebvre 1991, 88). When exploring the city, Lefebvre writes that we are “confronted not by one social space but by many”, engaging with “an unlimited multiplicity or uncountable set of social spaces which we refer to generically as ‘social space’” (*ibid*, 86). Similarly, in *For Space* (2005), Doreen Massey describes space not as static, closed, or representational, but rather as a product of interrelations. Space works as a point of crossover that offers “a more challenging political landscape”, concerned with a multiplicity of histories rather than one linear story (*ibid*, 13).⁸⁸ As Hélène Neveu Kringelbach (2014, 51) notes, histories of space as human interaction are equally histories of power: just as space is produced through aspirations for social mobility, they are also produced through colonial violence and trade, and through the subsequent agency of states and global funding structures. Tamale’s twentieth century spatial history is produced through the layered and intersecting perspectives and interests of Dagbamba residents, Hausa and Yoruba traders, Lebanese and Sindhi merchants, colonial German and British administration, foreign missionaries, Muslim clerics, and Southern Ghanaian politicians, bankers, and teachers. These people at varying times negotiated or worked in dialogue with one another, and at other times contested, resisted, became subject to, and worked in tension with each other’s economic, cultural, religious, and technological desires and ideas. In other words, “no space disappears in the course of growth and development” (Lefebvre 1991, 86). Rather, encounters across difference reveal the unexpected, unstable, messy, and surprising features of cultural production (Tsing 2005, 3). The fabric of urban life is thus continually in the making, co-produced through what Anna

⁸⁸ Similar ideas are found in Christian Norberg-Schulz’s work on the phenomenology of architecture and the “genius loci”. He suggests that places must be interpreted in ever-new ways, dependent on the continually changing historical contexts of a place (Norberg-Schulz 1980, 18 and 182).

Tsing terms “friction: the awkward, unequal, unstable and creative qualities of interconnection across difference” (*ibid*, 4).

Colonial Northern Territories and Tamale’s Early Urban Development

Despite its current rapid growth, Tamale is a relatively new city. Before it was chosen as the British administrative centre for the north in 1907, Tamale was a small cluster of villages within the Kingdom of Dagbon (Soeters 2012, 4 and 14-15). In precolonial times, Yendi, a town located one hundred kilometres to the East of Tamale, was the seat of the paramount chief, and thus far more politically significant to Dagbamba people (*ibid*, 4 and 14-18). When British and German colonial governments divided the region of Dagbon between colonial states in 1896, Germany claimed the Eastern portion of Dagbon including Yendi, a region that remained within German Togoland until Germany’s defeat in WWI. In contrast, British colonial agents claimed the Western portion of Dagbon, a region with far less political and economic stead (*ibid*, 18). Because the British portion of Dagbon lacked a central political centre, colonial officials chose a makeshift capital, Tamale. When the East and West of Dagbon reunited under British rule following WWI, Tamale had already been regional capital for the British colony for a decade. It had developed into a key city for trade in the Northern region, inhabited by not only indigenous inhabitants, but also Hausa traders from Northern Nigeria, Yoruba traders from Western Nigeria, British officers, and Ghanaian southerners (MacGaffey 2006a, 111; Soeters 2012, 50; Staniland 1975, 1).



Figure 7 Map of the Gold Coast (1927)

Caption: Above, the Gold Coast colony is in yellow, the Northern Territories is in green, and the former German Togoland is in grey. Note the colonial division of Dagbon, with Tamale in green and Yendi in grey. Map used with permission from the Basel Mission Image Archive.



Figure 8 “Tamale Seen From The East, 1910”.
Image used with permission from the Basel Mission Image Archive.

During the early colonial period (from 1890 to 1910), administrators in the Northern Territories pursued agrarian capitalist development, seeking to curb so-called “unprogressive” African political and social systems through the introduction of wage labour, taxation, and landlordism (Grischow 1999, 26-28; Grishow 2006, 20; Capps 2018, 977; Phillips 1989, 12). The early push for agrarian capitalism is evidenced in Chief Commissioner Alan Watherson’s address at the opening of Tamale as the new headquarters in April 1907. In an address to nearly sixty chiefs from Tamale’s surrounding areas, he explains:

“We have no doubt [that Tamale] will very soon form the distributing centre of trade in the Northern Territories [which] extends to Sokoto, Kano, the Upper Niger, Tenkodogo, Morocco, and Tripoli, in fact to everywhere where the Kola nut is in demand. To help yourselves you must produce things that traders will buy. You have enormous herds of cattle which you keep to look at. There are plenty of Kumasi traders ready to buy them, and give you money for them or cloths. Your cotton can be improved, and I hope shortly to be able to give out cotton seeds to people round here, who will be able to sell their cotton to traders in this town. Shea-butter nuts and Shea-butter will all bring you money ... Some of your youngmen [sic] should come here for permanent work and learn carpentering, blacksmith and stone-mason, trades in all of which they can earn money in the future ... When European traders come here they will want men who can talk English and Dagomba, English and Mamprussi, English and

Wala, English and Gonja and those youngmen who can do this will get work and good wages at once.”⁸⁹

However, during the 1910s, an emerging liberal lobby in Britain spoke out against the growth of colonial land tenure and landlordism in West Africa. For the Labour Party in Britain, it was important to “defend Africans from capitalist penetration”, viewing colonialism “through the prism of the anti-slavery campaign” (Keleman 2007, 77). They advocated for “African production on African terms”, by which they meant “peasant producers working communal land” (Grischow 1999, 8).⁹⁰ In order to escape the purview of the Labour party’s advisors, the colonial administration in the Northern Territories endorsed the project of development without denationalisation, working to prevent the emergence of civil society, and as a result, discouraging the growth of any sizable wage-earning urban population (Grischow 2006, 62 and 236; Soeters 2012, 159; Keleman 2007, 77-78). In order to promote cash-cropping peasantry and secure access to land, colonial officials turned to local chiefs to govern on their behalf, evading any implication of direct rule in the process (Capps 2018, 977).⁹¹

Despite this turn away from capitalist penetration, Tamale continued to grow as a trading hub, quickly making it an uncomfortable fit within new colonial development policies (Grischow 1999, 65; Soeters 2012, 65). Tamale’s urban history is thus often excluded from larger studies of colonial development projects in the Northern Territories. Scholarship concerning Northern Ghana’s colonial development is extensive: in the 1970s, scholars explored Northern history in terms of colonial education (Thomas 1974), political change (Staniland 1975), and underdevelopment (Plange 1979). By the mid-2000s, another body of literature emerged concerning colonialism in Northern Ghana, including Sean Hawkins’ work on writing and colonialism (2002), Jeff Grishow’s work on colonial policies of development (1999 and 2006), Carola Lentz’s work on ethnicity and history (2006), and Jean Allman and John Parker’s (2006) work on colonialism and religion in the Northern Territories. David Killingray (2000) has explored masculinity and ethnicity in Northern Ghana, while Jessica Cammaert (2016) has examined body politics in colonial Northern Ghana. Several works have explored Tamale’s history directly: Soeters’ (2012) doctoral thesis explores the colonial history of trade, indirect rule, and chieftaincy in Tamale from

⁸⁹ “Opening of New Headquarters at Tamale.” PRAAD-Accra, ADM 56/1/73.

⁹⁰ For a general overview of West African colonial economies and infrastructural plans, see Karin Barber’s recent chapter on West African cities and popular culture (2018, 73-99).

⁹¹ As Naaborko Sackeyfio-Lenoch (2014, 6-8) notes, matters of land and chieftaincy were dealt with differently in the urbanising capital of Accra as compared to the interior. Such colonial impositions were received differently depending on where they implemented and the historical context of that place.

1907 to 1957. African historian Wyatt MacGaffey (2006a) also offers a brief overview of Tamale's history from 1907-1957. Jeremy Seymour Eades (1994) examined the deportation of Tamale's Yoruba traders following the alien compliance order of 1969. Recently, Samuel Ntewusu and Edward Nanbigne (2015) have explored the history of tricycles in Tamale.

The Great North Road and Urban Planning in 1920s and 1930s Tamale

The most monumental shift in Tamale's urban growth in the twentieth century was the building of the Great North Road, built to facilitate tours of important politicians and the day to day travels of colonial administrators by motor car (Soeters 2012, 33 and 54). Completed in 1920, the Great North Road connected Tamale to the Southern coastal economies via the city of Kumasi to the South, and to Northern economies as well, extending to Bolgatanga, Navrongo, and Bawku (Ntewusu 2014; Soeters 2012, 33) – see Figure 7. Feeder roads to the East and West of Tamale connected agrarian communities to this colonial centre also: the subsequent availability of agricultural goods for sale in Tamale, such as livestock and kola nuts, further established Tamale as a key hub for trade (Eades 1994, 31; Taafe 1963, 509-510). The Great North Road also facilitated the Southward movement of Northern labourers to build the Accra-Kumasi railway, which opened in 1923, and Takoradi port, built between 1926 to 1928 (Obeng-Odoom 2014, 80; Rouch 1954, 8). Following the completion of the railway and port, exploitation of raw materials sourced in the colonies, such as gold and cocoa, encouraged further Northern labour migration into Southern mines and farms (Rouch 1954, 8; Soeters 2012, 67-68). These Southward movements created a new class of seasonal labourers who arrived back in the North with substantial expendable income, entering into the cash economy (*ibid*).⁹² As I discuss in more depth below, these North-South movements became significant to the region's media history in the 1930s, as migrant labourers brought gramophones and gramophone records with them when returning home from months of labour.

With the completion of the Great North Road, Syrian, Lebanese, Sindhi, and European merchants took notice of Tamale, and by the late 1920s, small stores were

⁹² Colonial administrative anxieties around the procurement of Northern labour for the railways and mines are evident in the document "Gold Coast Railways Extension 1922". In this document, the administration discusses their inability to maintain Northern labour, as many labourers would not leave the North during the farming season, and seasonal labourers had developed a general distrust of colonial officials, complaining that they rarely paid on time. See: "Gold Coast Railways Extension 1922." PRAAD-Accra, ADM56/1/315.

built in town by intra and inter-colonial traders, who retailed in sugar, soap, bicycle tyres, and flour (Ntewusu 2014, 13; Soeters 2012, 24 and 64). Petty traders arrived to fill voids in emerging markets: the emergence of lorry parks opened up markets for spare parts for automobiles and auto mechanics, ticket sellers, book men, and food vendors, to name a few (Ntewusu 2014, 18; Soeters 2012, 24). By the early 1930s, six plots were built in the central area of Tamale for commercial purposes: Mr Kassardian, a Lebanese businessman, built an underground petrol tank and petrol pump; the Compagnie Francaise de L'Afrique Occidentale (CFAO) ran a motor and fitting shop; and several other commercial plots were given to Paterson Zachonis, a Scottish-Greek entity, Abudu Ghanem, a Lebanese trader, and the Societe Commerciale L'Ouest Africain (SCOA) (Soeters 2012, 142-143). That most of these early businesses worked in car manufacturing and repairs is not coincidental, as they supported the increased movement of labourers into and out of Tamale.

At the end of WWI, Tamale welcomed an influx of ex-servicemen who entered the local economy with cash remuneration from the government (*ibid*, 67). As David Killingray notes, a large number of those involved in the Gold Coast regiment were from the North of Ghana, while many others came from neighbouring French colonies, including Hausa, Kanjarga, Mossi, and Grunshi men (2000, 123-127; see also Pellow 2002, 45).⁹³ Ex-servicemen's movement back to Tamale following the war shaped the urban development of the town, such as the construction of the Mossi Zongo in the 1920s to house French West African ex-servicemen (Soeters 2012, 79). Despite there being no data available on the resettlement of soldiers following the war, many colonial documents reference a large group of young ex-servicemen in Tamale at that time, and considering that many had trained at the military base in Tamale prior to serving in the war, Tamale may have been a prime location for resettlement, nearer to families yet based within a newly emerging urban economy (*ibid*, 77-81).

Following the influx of traffic and trade into Tamale from all directions with the Great North Road, the colonial administration began to take note of the need for urban plans in the town. By as early as 1925, the Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories detailed a report on the improvement of Tamale:

⁹³ The majority Northern makeup of the Gold Cost regiment has to do with colonial stereotypes about the physical strength of Northerners, as they were targeted during recruitments (Killingray 2000).

I am very anxious about the future development of Tamale. A railway will reach there inevitably in about ten years and it will become an important centre. In the meantime, the gradual improvement of the Great North Road will bring certain traders into town, and unless Tamale is now properly laid out in building plots, roads, etc., we shall only experience the old trouble of having to clean up the mess.⁹⁴

By 1928, the colonial administration described Tamale as “a very important distributing centre, especially during the rains, as it is road head, and in consequence buildings are being erected.”⁹⁵ Until the onset of WWII, colonial administration in the town focussed energies on the development of Tamale’s urban centre. During this period, Tamale’s growth was correlated to motorised trade, experiencing a rapid increase in population during the 1920s, that decreased with the fall of trade during WWII (*ibid*, 24).



Figure 9 “Tamale Market Scene, 1928”.

Image used with permission from the Basel Mission Image Archive.

⁹⁴ “Tamale Town – Improvement of.” PRAAD-Accra, ADM56/1/129.

⁹⁵ *ibid*.

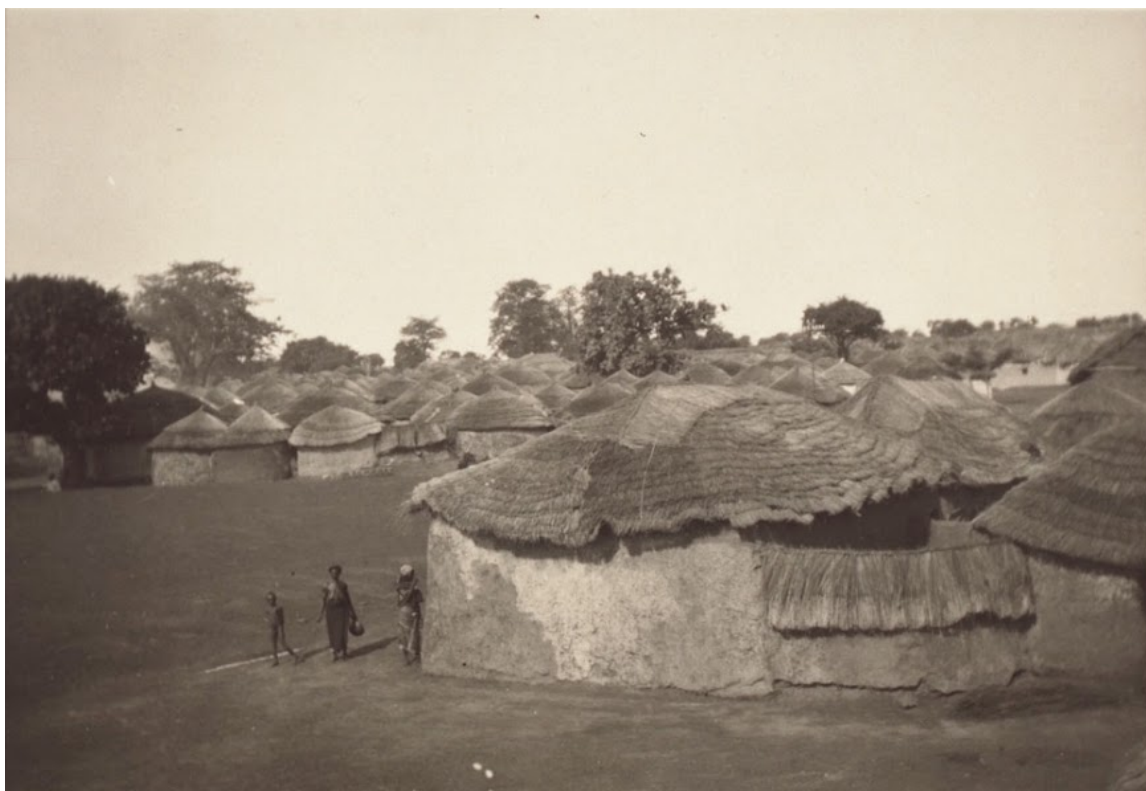


Figure 10 “View of Tamale, 1928”.
Image used with permission form the Basel Mission Image Archive.

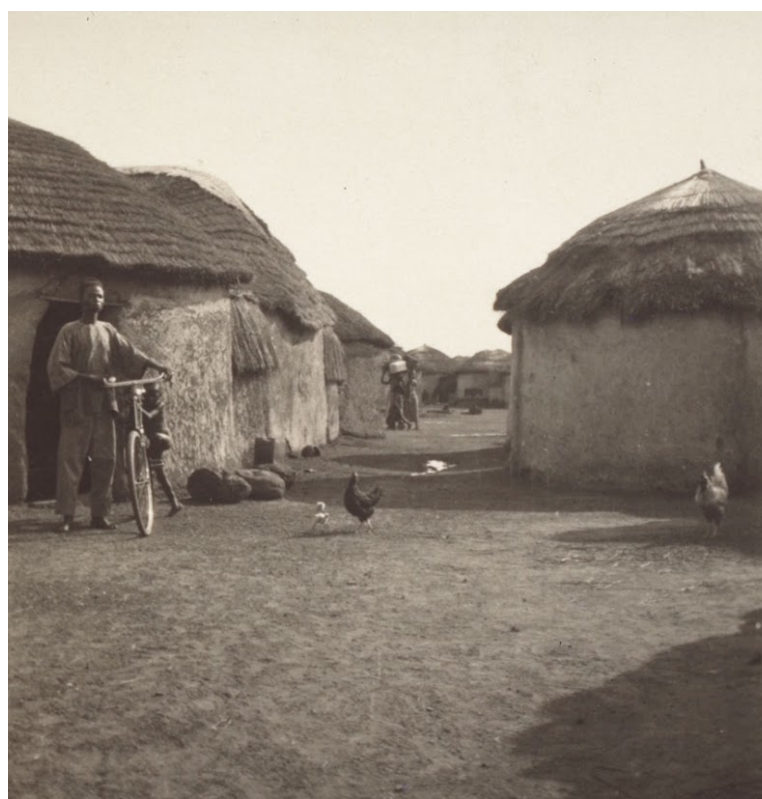


Figure 11 “View of Tamale, 1928”.
Image used with permission form the Basel Mission Image Archive.

World War II

Between 1939 and 1945, sixty-five thousand Ghanaians were recruited by the British to serve in the Royal West African Frontier Force. Thirty thousand of these men served in Burma, travelling first to India for training and refuelling (Israel 1987, 159). Similar to recruitment patterns in WWI, the majority of those recruited for WWII in the Gold Coast were Northerners (Eades 1994, 31; Israel 1987, 159; Killingray 2000, 127; Rouch 1954, 9). Northern soldiers in WWII interacted with other soldiers from across the British empire in India and Burma. Many from the Gold Coast had conversations with those in India about the Indian nationalist movement, stories that inspired political activism upon return to the Gold Coast (Israel 1987, 159).⁹⁶ Soldiers from the Gold Coast discussed religion, politics, and colonial experiences on trains and in public gathering spaces with soldiers from around the world (*ibid*, 166). In an interview with me, the last living WWII veteran in Tamale recalled his experiences watching films for the first time in the barracks in Burma: there were three cinema shows each week, one for senior officers, one for non-commissioned British officers, and another for the soldiers, who came from Sierra Leone, the Gambia, the Gold Coast, and Nigeria. They showed many Indian films in the camps, and on special occasions, Indian actors would come to Burma to stage dramas at the barracks.⁹⁷

Many of these experiences reached those living in the Gold Coast through both mediated and non-mediated means. Scenes of African soldiers fighting in Burma were shown on colonial mobile cinema vans, that traveled throughout rural regions of the colony (Colonial Cinema 1945, 12).⁹⁸ During the war, radio became a driving force for connecting soldiers with citizens in the Gold Coast, as soldiers' calls home were broadcast on air.⁹⁹ After the war, children in Tamale would visit the houses of former

⁹⁶ The movement of soldiers abroad fed into post-war liberation and decolonisation struggles across West Africa. Following World War II, colonies throughout Africa saw independence movements and political struggles against colonial governments arising elsewhere. Many of Ghana's ex-servicemen expected proper recompense for their services including jobs, war bonuses, and pensions. Instead, most ex-servicemen struggled with unemployment following their return and received little credit for their service. The lack of recompense from the colonial British administration inspired the formation of the Ex-Servicemen's Union that held meetings and protests concerning British rule, often supporting larger Independence leaders, including Kwame Nkrumah (Grischow 1999, 264; Israel 1987, 162-168).

⁹⁷ Interview with WWII veteran in Tamale, Ghana on 17 August 2016.

⁹⁸ During the late colonial period, the Gold Coast film unit owned mobile cinema vans that travelled across the country screening a mix of newsreels, documentaries, and short entertainment films on specially equipped lorries (Collins 2005a, 20; Bloom 2014; McFeely 2015, 98). See also: "Observations on the African and the Cinema, 1938-1940." PRAAD-Accra, CSO25/1/31.

⁹⁹ "Broadcasting Vernacular Recorded Messages from Soldiers in India and Burma to Relatives in Gold Coast." PRAAD-Kumasi, ARG/6/8/4.

servicemen to listen to stories about the war in Burma (Mahama 2012, 139). Soldiers brought back new musical and filmic experiences as well. Catherine Cole notes that various concert party theatre singers who travelled and performed throughout the Gold Coast following the war were ex-servicemen who fought in Burma. The songs they sang in the party theatres included songs and slang learned during training in India (Cole 2001, 93 and 112).

Post-War Economic Boom, 1945-1957

The ten years after WWII are pivotal to the study of mediated music and film in the Gold Coast as well as colonial Nigeria. At this time, primary goods were exported for six times their value, and foreign imports increased substantially (Barber, Collins, and Ricard 1997, 3). With more cash circulating, urban people had money to spend on new goods, and governments began investing in development policies and services in the colonies (*ibid*). Much investment went into the building of railways and roads, encouraging the movement of wage labourers and farmers throughout the colonies (*ibid*; Barber 2018, 77-80). In these years, West African urban growth was the fastest in the world (*ibid*). For example, between 1948 and 1960, Accra's population increased from 124,000 to 388,000, while Lagos' population grew from 333,000 to over a million (*ibid*).

Tamale experienced similar population growth in these years, especially with respect to returnee soldiers who arrived into the town with cash to spend (Rouch 1954, 8; Soeters 2012, 82-83). Alongside veteran returnees, there was yet another stream of migration into Tamale from surrounding French colonies: as explained in Chapter Two, the end of WWII left French West Africa in a far worse economic position than British West African colonies, and with the implementation of rations in the region, the Gold Coast experienced a rush of migrants from surrounding French colonies into the Gold Coast (Rouch 1954, 9). Soldiers' remuneration brought profound influence on music, film, and the arts in the region. For example, those labouring within the barracks either as soldiers or staff could afford new technologies like gramophones for their homes, and this newfound purchasing power inspired increased circulation of gramophone players and records in the region.¹⁰⁰ While it is commonly thought that gramophones were expensive technologies, reserved for the elite, Stephen Hughes notes that as early

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Abdul Ghafaar in Tamale, Ghana on 29 August, 2016.

as the late 1920s, gramophones became less expensive. Japanese companies began manufacturing cheaper versions of the existing gramophone model, and these gramophones flooded global markets, lowering the cost of the machine (Hughes 2002, 451). Urban workers, farmers, and soldiers could afford the available wind-up gramophones and imported music records for sale in Kumasi, Accra, and other coastal towns (Collins 2011, 162).



Figure 12 1957 Advertisements from the *Daily Graphic* Newspaper

As a result of plastic needed for the war effort, there was a limit on the production of gramophone records in the colony during WWII, and gramophone sales slumped (*ibid*, 164). However, the post-war economic boom rejuvenated the commercial recording industry in West Africa, and new Western multinational companies invested in the Ghanaian record business (*ibid*). There was a rise in locally recorded music during this time, as some companies set up recording studios in Accra, Nsawam, Sekondi, and Kumasi. However, most Ghanaian musical recordings available in the 1950s were in Southern languages, such as Akan, Ga, and Ewe, with only a few records in Hausa, and even fewer in Dagbani (Nketia 1956, 194-196).

Following the economic boom, Lebanese, Syrian, and Sindhi merchants began to apply to the Tamale Sanitary Board for commercial plots in Tamale's town centre.¹⁰¹ The colonial administration was keen to build a new area for commercial trade in Tamale's oldest neighbourhood (Ward D), located on the major road into town, near the central mosque and market (Soeters 2012, 140).¹⁰² During these years, the District Commissioner consistently wrote about his aim for Ward D to be used for "high class

¹⁰¹ "Application for Commercial Plots." PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/77.

¹⁰² "Tamale Ward D New Layout 1946-1954." PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/240.

commercial sites”, with plans to “empty houses” in order to clear plots for “reputable Syrian or Lebanese traders of Accra and Kumasi.”¹⁰³ By 1949, the District Commissioner enacted a “small slum clearance project” that would “remove certain ‘mud’ houses with thatch roofs and re-layout the site for commercial premises of high standard.”¹⁰⁴ Urban planners in the Northern Territories used a pathogenic approach to justify the demolition of traditional housing structures in Tamale, claiming that these houses were too dark and unventilated for inhabitants to live in.¹⁰⁵

Colonial officers received continual pressure and written protest from chiefs and elders about the demolition of Ward D, making the actual building of the new commercial area impossible during the colonial period.¹⁰⁶ In February, 1947 inhabitants of Ward D wrote:

We, the undersigned elders residing on Ward D in Tamale humbly beg to forward our grievances to you... Last Monday... you informed us that most of our houses in Ward D would soon be demolished; and our plots would be given to aliens to build stores... our houses in Ward D were built by our forefathers, before the Whiteman came... these buildings are sacred and too dear to be demolished. If our plots would be used by Government to build Post office, treasury, Hospital or School which would be beneficial to our country would be welcomed. But as it is Government is driving us away from our forefathers’ soil and giving it to aliens to build stores. This is unpleasant to us. And we hope that the District Commissioner would recognize it.¹⁰⁷

The struggle over Ward D continued throughout the late colonial period, as whenever colonial urban planners sought to clear the area, residents resisted. For example, in 1949, local inhabitants further appealed for meetings with the government over their attempts to “drive us and our poor families from our houses and give the land to various firms.”¹⁰⁸ Like other colonial cities, Tamale’s land was constantly contested and rethought through uneven and unequal histories of dispossession and accumulation (McFarlane 2011, 652).

As mentioned in Chapter Two, inter- and intra-colonial traders began establishing cinemas across West Africa in this post-war era. In the Southern Gold

¹⁰³ *ibid* and “Tamale Town Layout 1952.” PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/39.

¹⁰⁴ “Tamale Ward D New Layout 1946-1954.” PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/240.

¹⁰⁵ “Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of the Gold Coast, 1931-1932.”

¹⁰⁶ “Tamale Ward D New Layout 1946-1954”. PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/240.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid*.

¹⁰⁸ *ibid*.

Coast, Lebanese and Sindhi businessmen opened up cinemas throughout Accra, Kumasi, Takoradi, and other coastal towns at this time (McFeely 2015, 157; Rouch 1954, 9). Attempts were made by Lebanese and African businessmen to establish a cinema in Tamale, though colonial urban planners consistently delayed or denied these applications.¹⁰⁹ As a result, Tamale did not have a cinema until after Independence in the late 1950s. This is rather unusual for a growing West African urban centre during this period, as following WWII, most cities throughout West Africa had cinema halls (McFeely 2015, 45).¹¹⁰ Hints of colonial anxieties over the place of cinemas in Tamale are found in the archives: for example, in September 1948, the Chief Commissioner for the Northern Territories requested to know of any public buildings planned for the new commercial ward (Ward D), such as “cinemas, churches or mosques in the new layout”, to which Tamale’s urban planners explained there would be “ample provision for open spaces and space for community centres, day schools, churches, and mosques”, avoiding the subject of cinemas altogether.¹¹¹ The colonial administration might have avoided the advent of cinemas for fear they would draw farmers away from agrarian production. Such limitations on leisure was not uncommon in the colonial context: in her study of colonial Brazzaville, Phyllis Martin notes how colonial agents “intervened in African leisure time when the health and efficiency of the workforce seemed to be at stake” (Martin 2002, 71). Another reason for the colonial officials’ rejection of cinema plot applications could be to maintain control over what films were shown in the region. Up to that point, Northerners were only accustomed to watching colonial film reels that were largely health and educational propaganda. Colonial administrators and moralists in various African contexts were wary of how commercial Hollywood films, with their violence, corruption, and immorality, might “explode the mystique of white superiority and encourage rebellious subjects” (Martin 2002, 87;

¹⁰⁹ The Ghanem brothers (a Lebanese business family in the Northern Territories) continually applied to build a cinema in Tamale between 1949 and 1954 to no avail. There are two examples during the colonial period where African businessmen (mainly ex-servicemen) applied to build cinemas in Tamale. In 1947, an ex-serviceman named Mr Sagoe was reported projecting his mainly American films that he had rented in Tamale (see “Informal Diary, District Commissioner, Tamale, Packham.” PRAAD-Tamale, NRG 2/7/2, quoted in Soeter 2012, 174); the other was by Alhassan Dagomba, who applied for a cinema plot in 1952, but decided to put up a hotel rather than a cinema on his plot (See “Tamale New Commercial Area Application for Plots and General Correspondence 1951-1955.” PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/77).

¹¹⁰ Cinemas first arrived in the Gold Coast with the British merchandise company, Bartholomew and Co.’s opening of the Merry Villas cinematograph palace in Accra in 1913 (Garritano 2013, 27). In the 1930s, African merchant Alfred John Kabu Ocansey opened the Cinema Theatre at Azuma and Palladium in Accra (*ibid*). In 1937, the West African Pictures Company was formed by S. Kahlil, a Syrian living in Lagos, Nigeria, who soon after opened theatres in the Gold Coast (McFeely 2015, 25; Reynolds 2015, 35). By 1942, private distribution companies, including the West African Pictures Limited, the Captan Cinema Company, and the Nankani Cinema Company, had twenty-five theatres in the Gold Coast colony (Garritano 2013, 27-28).

¹¹¹ “Tamale Town Layout 1952.” PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/39.

McFeely 2015, 111; Newell 2002, 119-122). While it was much more difficult for colonial administrators to control the circulation of music records that were sold in trading houses and rapidly distributed throughout various African colonies in the late colonial period, they could curb the circulation of foreign cinema through their urban planning measures (Martin 2002, 87).

Independence and the Push for a “Modern” Tamale

By the late 1950s and into the 1960s, the end of colonialism was in sight across the continent. New sub-Saharan African leaders expressed ambitions to build “modern” African nations, and infrastructure came to represent the “promise of independent rule rather than colonial supremacy” (Larkin 2008, 8). In July 1956, elections for the Legislative Assembly were held in the Gold Coast. When Nkrumah and the Convention People’s Party (CPP) gained a reasonable majority, a motion was served on the British government to grant Independence. With the assuredness of Ghanaian Independence by the latter months of 1956, Tamale’s “development” took a new course. Making Tamale “modern” was a major concern for Ghana’s first Northern Regional Commissioner, Mumuni Bawumia. Because the North was one of Ghana’s poorest regions under colonial rule, its development signified the CPP’s ability to develop an Independent state successfully. The CPP overlooked residential resistance to relocation and slum clearance, and during the early 1960s, Ward D was cleared for new commercial plots (Soeters 2012, 152). The image below from the *Ghanaian Times* depicts the building of Ward I (Aboaba Market) in 1962, with flats meant to house the 3,000 Ward D residents evicted from their homes:



Figure 13 “Building of Ward I, June 9, 1962”.
Image from the *Ghanaian Times*

In June 1962, a ten-page newspaper article titled “A *Ghanaian Times* Focus on Tamale: Where Amazing Progress is Taking Place” was published in the state-owned newspaper, the *Ghanaian Times*. The article depicted the government’s infrastructural changes in Tamale. This news feature is littered with headlines and advertisements highlighting state perspectives on what progress and development meant in Tamale five years after Independence. Article titles concerning Tamale’s development include: “Good street lights”, “£G47,000 for Good Streets”, “Roads and Bridges”, “An up-to-date Secondary School and New Market”, “Education stepped up”, “Tamale Now Has Modern Buildings”, “Roads: The Life of Ghana”, and “Meet a Woman Worker”. The focus features multiple images of large, concrete buildings, including the regional commissioner’s office, a day nursery, and a hospital, as well as a series of images of major roads built in the region. As journalist K.O. Adu wrote in the 1962 focus:

Prior to our attaining political independence, the opinion was generally held that [the North]...was a place for the ‘cursed’ civil servants and workers. Conditions there were such that those living in that part of the country suffered terribly from squalor, disease, ignorance, and want...five years have elapsed since our country started breathing the air of real political freedom...to reflect on the progress made in Ghana since the country’s entry into nationhood without seeing some of the significant landmarks that constitute our maturity to manage our own affairs is just like giving evidence in a case about which you know little or nothing.

Tamale’s infrastructural development is highlighted throughout the newspaper issue as evidence of the CPP’s successful leadership in these first few years. To do so, the author juxtaposes “old Tamale” and “new Tamale” in a series of images with accompanying text, of which page seven is particularly illuminating:



Figure 14 "The Old Tamale Will Soon Disappear."

Photograph by P.K. Yamoah.
From the *Ghanaian Times*.
9th June 1962, page 7.

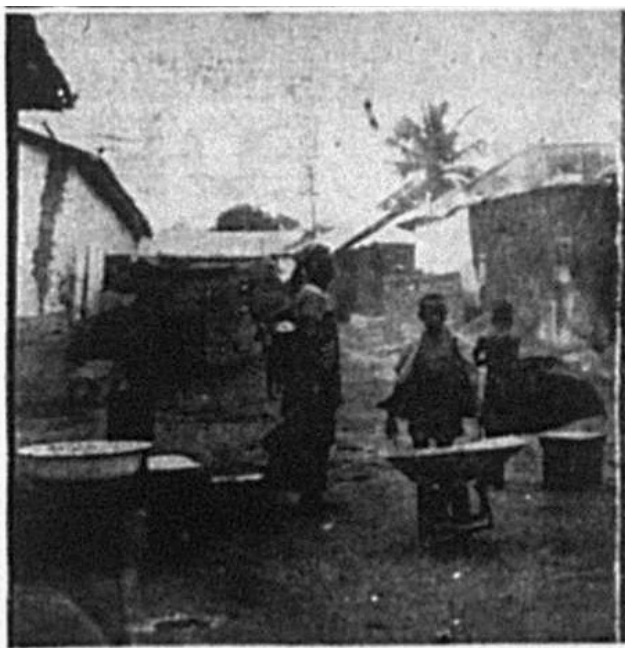


Figure 15 "The Old Tamale Will Soon Disappear."

Photograph by P.K. Yamoah.
From the *Ghanaian Times*.
9th June 1962, page 7.



Figure 16 "Meet a Woman Worker."

Image of "the only woman in Ghana who is courageously executing the services of a messenger" pictured here on "the modern road on which she plies every day in course of work".
Photograph by P.K. Yamoah. from the *Ghanaian Times*.
9th June 1962, page 7.



Figure 17 "Father Buys a House."

Bank of West Africa Limited Advertisement.

From the *Ghanaian Times*.
9th June 1962, page 7.

Adjacent to figures 13 and 14, Adu writes:

These two pictures...show the old Tamale which the Government is mustering every effort to replace with modern living conveniences. Already, much has been done towards the target of completely changing the face of Tamale. With our energetic Government always scheming towards a happy life for the people, the old Tamale will soon disappear.¹¹²

These two photographs are of women and children outside of homes in Tamale. In figure 13, a woman wearing a headscarf holds a child while another woman cooks, while in figure 14, a woman carries a child on her back while another child pushes a wheelbarrow. Juxtaposing these photographs is figure 16, an image of what appears to be a Christian nuclear family who buy a two-story home, and figure 15, a woman worker riding a bicycle on Tamale's "modern" roads.¹¹³ Though the text says very little about the relationship between women and development, these images clearly relate women's labour and dress to notions of Tamale's underdevelopment and development.¹¹⁴ Demolition of old sites lead way to new modern homes and roads, that make possible new ways of living, including new family structures, and new kinds of labour participation. As I detail in more depth in Chapter Five, both colonial and post-colonial governments in Ghana viewed the family as a significant site for development. Subsequent governments worked to encourage nuclear family structure over extended family cohabitation, such as polygamous family units. The journalist's juxtaposition of "old Tamale" and "new Tamale" in figures 13 and 14 likely reflect governmental anxieties over Tamale's extended family units, where the "old Tamale" might be replaced by a "modern" monogamous, nuclear family unit, as is pictured in figure 16.

That the CPP intended to replace an "old Tamale" with a "new Tamale" reveals more about the CPP's perceptions of development than anything else. Turino writes that such modernist ideologies were common in emerging states, who worked to present indigenous alternatives to capitalist notions of modernity as primitive and "of the past" (2008, 7). Of course, the CPP's infrastructural and ideological projects were never wholly adopted by residents, and though this article proclaims that the "old Tamale" would disappear, existing social structures remained intact. Lefebvre writes

¹¹² Adu, K.O. "A Ghanaian Times Focus on Tamale: Where Amazing Progress is Taking Place." *The Ghanaian Times*, 9 June 1962, pages 4-13.

¹¹³ As I discuss in more detail in Chapter Five, the concept of buying a home is an imported concept in the city, as men tend to either stay living on their family plot throughout life or in the case of married women, move to their husband's family plot.

¹¹⁴ These images also pair "underdevelopment" with images of Muslim women, and "development" with images of Christian women. The relationship between class and faith in Ghana is discussed in more depth in Chapter Two.

how “no space disappears in the course of growth and development”, but that rather these spaces superimpose and interpenetrate one another (Lefebvre 1991, 86). Though the government introduced Christian day schools, “modern” hospitals, and new blocks of nuclear housing flats, these did not replace Islamic schools, neighbourhood herbalists, or extended family housing. Instead, Tamale came to reflect a “historical layering of networks” layering alternative and foreign ontologies onto existing social structures in Dagbon (Larkin 2008, 6).

Radio, Cinema, and the Rise of Media in Tamale

For the CPP, infrastructures of leisure, including cinema buildings and radio kiosks, were of particular importance in the early years of Independence. As will become clear in this section, the new government went to great lengths to ensure that different kinds of media access were available to Tamale inhabitants, where media was both a measure and marker of development.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, Ghana’s first radio broadcast was delivered in Accra in July 1935. Between 1936 and 1937, the Gold Coast Broadcasting System opened re-diffusion centres across the coastal South and in Kumasi as well (Ghartey-Tagoe 2015; Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Periodicals July 1972, 2). During the first radio broadcast in Accra, the Governor of the Gold Coast described the radio as a “magic stone” that could transport listeners anywhere in the world. He explained how:

Few can realize what the new service will mean. It opens up a new horizon. It brings the latest news to our doors. It is very similar to the magic stone we read about in fairy tales. We press a button and are transported to London. Again, we press it and hear an opera from Berlin. In fact, nearly the whole world is at our beck and call. You can imagine what an influence this will have from the psychological point of view. Mothers, when their children have been fractious or they have had a trying day cooking and washing, or men, who have had a day’s work, will sit down and listen to first-class music which will banish their cares and make them forget all their worries (see Ewusi-Brookman 1981, 1).

Nearer the end of the war, the first short-wave wireless 1.3kw transmitter began to broadcast in Ghana, and radio was broadcast in Twi, Fante, Ga, and Ewe throughout coastal towns (Collins 2005a, 19; David Ghartey-Tagoe 2015; Ewusi-Brookman 1981, 2). By 1943, two Hausa language broadcasters joined the team to launch a Hausa programme as well (Ghana Broadcasting Corporation Periodicals July 1972, 2). While

the rise of radio in Southern urban centres foregrounded a rush of new media and popular music during these early post-war years, radio stations were not built in Tamale during the colonial period. It was not until the months leading up to Independence that new ministers explored the feasibility of establishing radio stations and broadcasting offices in the Northern region. By mid-1956, it was decided by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Works would build a relay service in Tamale and Navrongo, with G£13,500 in place to build a central broadcasting office there by 1957. It would comprise of studios and a central office built just north-west of town on education ridge, with radio kiosks dotted throughout town.¹¹⁵

In the early years of radio in Tamale, radios were accessible either through public listening stations or via private subscription service.¹¹⁶ The public boxes were attached to wooden poles with tin circular roofs, while the domestic boxes were attached to the walls of people's homes.¹¹⁷ Public radios were dotted around so-called "threshold spaces", public sites that bring together strangers, cutting across class, religion and ethnicity (Larkin 1998, 49; Larkin 2008, 132). During oral interviews, many older generations in Tamale recall hearing the radio at public listening stations situated in such public spaces throughout the town, such as outside Kjetia market, the Rivoli cinema, and opposite the Chief's palace. The only way to obtain a private radio box was to request a monthly radio subscription from the GBC, by which a government technician would install the box outside the subscriber's home. Even if one could afford the private radio box, the government technicians decided where the boxes would go, and would often install it on the exterior wall of one's home so that the surrounding community could also hear it. Once installed, the radio never turned off, airing programmes from the early morning until 10 p.m.¹¹⁸ As there were few Dagbani music records at this time, most music broadcast on the radio in early post-colonial Tamale was Southern Ghanaian music, with the occasional foreign popular song.

¹¹⁵ "Development Plant [sic] General Broadcasting." PRAAD-ACCRA, RG7/1/168; Conversation with former broadcaster at GBC Accra on 27 September 2016.

¹¹⁶ Larkin (2008, 52) notes similar instances in Kano, Northern Nigeria.

¹¹⁷ Conversation with Fuseini Abdulai Braimah in Tamale on 26 October 2016.

¹¹⁸ *ibid*; Interview with Samira in Tamale on 17 December 2017.



Figure 18 Radio Box

Caption: An example of a former kiosk radio box in Tamale, housed at Radio Savannah in Tamale, taken in 2016.

Similar to the introduction of radio at Independence, cinema was also central to Nkrumah's plans to rapidly urbanise Tamale. His intentions to build cinemas in Tamale are evidenced in archival papers throughout his time in government.¹¹⁹ In November 1956, five months prior to Independence Day, Nkrumah liaised with the Captan brothers (a major cinema business in Accra) to push through the building of a Rivoli cinema in Tamale.¹²⁰ This kind of collaboration was not unusual, as Nkrumah was known to work alongside foreign investors, mainly Lebanese and Syrian merchants, to aid in the creation of a "modern" Ghana (Akyeampong 2006, 315). In a curious archival document, Mr. Captan is noted as being "accompanied by two members of the Legislative Assembly", who argued that "the cinema must be completed before Independence Day." The Chief Regional Officer noted how anxious Nkrumah was to have a "first rate cinema be established in Tamale before Independence."¹²¹ Chiming with the earlier resistance of urban planners' to the building of cinemas, the Tamale urban council and land advisory committee was openly reticent to offer the new

¹¹⁹ Ntewusu and Nanbigne note that in the early 1960s, Nkrumah drew on urban planning strategies and city development ideologies from Eastern European socialist nations, with concern to residential patterns and urban economic activities (Ntewusu and Nanbigne 2015, 201).

¹²⁰ "Commercial Area." PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/136.

¹²¹ *ibid.*

commercial area plot to the Captans; however, Nkrumah seemingly bypassed late colonial urban planning schemes, building a cinema regardless of their concerns.¹²²

In the end, Nkrumah's push to have a cinema established in Tamale by Independence was successful, and the Rivoli cinema was the first and only "first rate" covered cinema hall with mezzanine seating in Tamale, situated in the centre of town.¹²³ Following Independence, the Ghanem family was finally approved for the building of the open air Victory cinema hall on the opposite side of the market to the Rivoli, that would seat 1,500 guests.¹²⁴ With the arrival of the Rivoli and Victory cinemas in the late 1950s, Tamale went from having no cinemas to two large-scale cinemas in just one year.



Figure 19 Rivoli Cinema, Date Unknown
Image provided by Mr. Robert Quarshie.

¹²² *ibid.*

¹²³ Conversation with former cinema owner in Tamale on 2 November 2015. See also: "Commercial Area." PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/58, and "Application for Commercial Plots." PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/77.

¹²⁴ *Dean & Pearl Exhibition Rates for Ghana: A Leaflet of Cinema Statistics*. 196. British Library Shelfmark 85/Cup.600.b.2.

The Victory and Rivoli cinemas quickly became popular with youth in the city as well as in surrounding rural areas. As renowned Dagbamba musician Alhaji Ibrahim Abdulai recalled of this period, youth preferred to leave the village and their families in order to attend the cinema hall and socialise with other youth (Abdulai and Chernoff, n.d. b). During oral history recordings and conversations with those who attended Tamale's cinemas in 1960s, it was common to hear reminiscing about how far one would travel just to see a new Hindi film, with many walking over an hour each way just to see a new film. For example, one former cinemagoer recalled how people living in areas including Katariga or Sishiagu (about an hour's walk from the cinema hall) faced overcrowding on the pathways walking home after the cinema show in the night, while other communities living several hours away in Tolon and Kumbungu sometimes walked home after the show as well.¹²⁵ Another interviewee recalled how he would walk to and from the Rivoli from his home in Nyohini (about a forty-five minute walk). Though the walk back in the dark forest was dangerous, he explained that "whatever I met [in the forest] I didn't care, because I was determined to see the film."¹²⁶ Other communities in more distant villages, such as Savelugu, Sang, Tolon, or Diyali would organise trucks to bring groups from the village to come to the cinema, especially when there was a new Indian film coming to town.¹²⁷ As many informants recalled to me of their time going to the cinema in the post-colonial period: "if you weren't there you were a villager!"

Similar to the popularity of Hindi films in Ghana's Southern Zongo communities, Hindi films were immensely popular in Tamale's cinema halls as well (McFeely 2015, 256). Hindi film songs from the cinema hall began to permeate the surrounding areas of the central market during this time. Each day before a Hindi film would play, a young musician named Muhammed Damidoo who regularly attended the Rivoli cinema in Tamale, would perform his own compositions outside the cinema at the nearby Goil petrol station. Adopting the stage name Albela (after the 1951 Hindi film of the same title), he played a *gunjon* (a metal container used to fetch water) to produce a percussive sound similar to what he heard in Hindi films, while often being accompanied by local dancers, who wore saris bought at market stalls while imitating dances found in Hindi films on screen. His family members recalled how in the dark cinema hall, he listened closely to each film song, writing down Hindi lyrics phonetically in Arabic script, which he had learned during his Islamic school studies in

¹²⁵ Conversation with Abdul Ghafaar in Tamale on 29 August 2016.

¹²⁶ Interview with Jeet in Tamale on 24 October, 2016.

¹²⁷ Interview with a former cinema manager in Tamale on 7 November 2015.

Yendi.¹²⁸ Following each cinema show, Albela sang out the Hindi lyrics written down in Arabic script line by line, sometimes rewriting each line into Tamale's two main languages, Dagbani and Hausa.¹²⁹

Instead of singing in Hindi, Albela's songs layered Dagbani and Hausa lyrics concerning urban life in Tamale overtop of his favourite melodies from the cinema. For example, one of his popular songs "Taanga Ni Bayanga" (The Shea Tree and Grass), based on melodies combined from the soundtrack from *Albela* (1951), tells a story of a shea tree, a blade of long grass, and a shrub, that live on the same hill. One day, the shea tree becomes very sick and asks the shrub for help, but the shrub rejects his call for help because they are different kinds of plant. The shrub talks to the long grass, and the long grass explains that "we are family" on the hill, and encourages the shrub to help the tree. The shrub refuses, and watches the tree die. Soon after, humans pass the hill and decide to chop down the tree for firewood. But as the tree is being chopped, the strangers cut up the shrub to create a mat for their head, to carry the tree on. To tie the wood together, they cut the long grass for rope. Albela ends the song by explaining the moral of the story: "we should all be united, so that if anybody comes from somewhere it will not be easy to destroy us." By "us", Albela is clearly referencing Northern Ghanaians: he lyrically maps out Tamale and its urban surroundings, with an extensive list of villages, towns, and cities that intersect with Tamale: Wulensi, Bimbila, Yendi, Kumasi, Accra, Mampong, Sunyani, Ejura, Techiman, Kumbungu, Savelugu, Walewale and even Ouagadougou. Later in the song, he details explicitly how those people from Northern cities and towns and even towns in neighbouring countries like Burkina Faso must work together to protect and unify the north. This story, like many others by Albela, offer insights on both the violence of colonialism and the rise of urban life in Northern Ghana. That cinemagoers heard Albela's songs and dances each night prior to entering the hall to watch the newest Hindi film is significant: even before going to see a new film, one could hear Hindi film songs being creatively adapted to reflect the experiences of youth living in Tamale at that time.

¹²⁸ Interview with family members in Yendi, Ghana on 28 October 2016.

¹²⁹ In fact, in one of his songs, he explicitly sings that he is "going to turn an Indian song into Hausa and Dagbani."



Figure 20 Albela, date unknown.
Imaged provided by Abubakari Sadiq.

Despite the success of the Rivoli and Victory cinemas, the CPP still desired to have a cinema of its own. Part of Nkrumah's election promise of 1956 was to establish state cinemas that could aid in the project of building a national culture, a process discussed in more depth in Chapter Two (Jorgensen 2001, 26; McFeely 2015, 175; Meyer 2015, 44-45).¹³⁰ Rather than establishing a state cinema, the CPP initially purchased West Africa Pictures Limited from the Lebanese Barakat family, and for the most part left existing business structures and employees in place (McFeely 2015, 175). Very little was done to realise the goal of an active state-owned cinema in Ghana during this time. Five years after Independence, the CPP merged West Africa Pictures Limited with the Ghana Film Production Corporation to form the Ghana Film Industry Corporation (GFIC), with aims to establish national cinema in Ghana (McFeely 2015, 184; Meyer 2015, 44-45). At this time, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting outlined plans to build a major cinema hall in Tamale's town centre.¹³¹ By September 1962, plots for a state-run cinema in Tamale had been surveyed, and rezoning, including the demolition of existing housing across eighty-six acres of land in Ward D,

¹³⁰ Alongside cinema, music and art were also significant in the CPP's state-sponsored modernisation program following Independence. As Nate Plageman details, Nkrumah pursued the creation of a collective Ghanaian identity based around local rather than foreign cultural elements, and sought to engage with the arts as a tool to realise the task (Plageman 2014, 245).

¹³¹ "Proposals for Building Cinemas in the Region." PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/255.

was set in order to make room for a cinema hall. This hall would accommodate “eight hundred to fifteen hundred spectators, parking for one hundred cars, foyer with bars, and a stage for plays and concerts.”¹³²

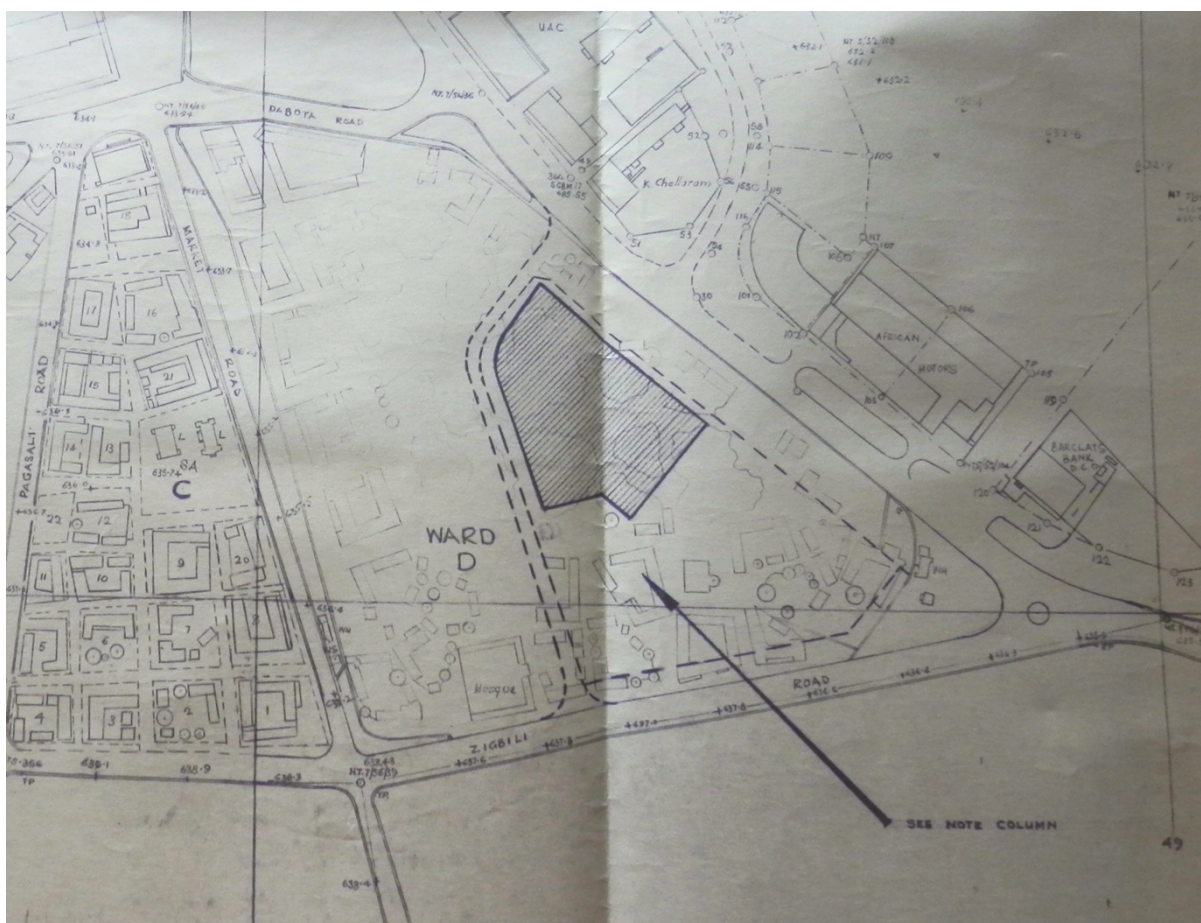


Figure 21 “Cinema Buildings” Tamale, 1962

Caption: Accessed from PRAAD Tamale, NRG8/1/255. Image shows the placement of the proposed cinema building, with residential houses erased.

Tamale’s state-run cinema hall never came to fruition, most likely due to the inability of the GFIC to afford such an ambitious endeavour at that time. While the state-owned West Africa Pictures Limited certainly worked towards the nationalisation of the arts, they struggled financially to compete with the other commercially owned cinemas, especially the Captan brothers’ network, as the Captans were financially flexible and responsive to the needs of overseas film distributors (McFeely 2015, 200). However, the effort that CPP made in attempting to build a major cinema at the centre of both trade and political life in Tamale (adjacent to the Chief’s palace and the market) makes clear that the state valued cinema as a social institution. That the cinema would

¹³² *ibid.*

be built in Ward D, a site of continual protests from elders in the late-colonial period, further speaks to the value that the CPP placed on cinema as a tool in state-building.¹³³



Figure 22 Ward D, Tamale in 2016.

Caption: Image of Ward D, Tamale in 2016. The shops in the yellow building are situated on the proposed site for a state cinema hall in the 1960s shown in the above map.

Subsequent States in Post-Colonial Ghana

In February 1966, Nkrumah and the CPP were overthrown by a military coup, making Kofi Busia the second Prime Minister of Ghana in 1969. Busia's first major piece of legislation was the Aliens Compliance Order, which required all those considered illegal aliens in Ghana, including those from surrounding West African countries, as well as Lebanese, Syrian, and Sindhi businessmen, to either obtain residence permits or leave the country. The compliance order prohibited non-Ghanaian participation in market trade, resulting in a mass exodus of many West Africans, Lebanese, and Sindhi traders and businesses from the country (Eades 1994, 1; Kobo 2010, 78-80). The compliance order had substantial effects in Ghana at large and in Tamale in particular: 8,000 Lebanese left Ghana for neighbouring countries during this time, and nearly the entire Yoruba community living in Tamale (who comprised the largest alien population in Tamale at that time) left *en masse* in 1970 (Eades 1994, 1; Akyeampong 2006, 316). In total, 200,000 aliens left Ghana within two weeks of the compliance order

¹³³ "Tamale Site for Cinema Buildings." PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/1/229.

(Eades 1994, 1). The anti-alien compliance order came at the height of cinema going in Tamale. Although this political policy would not be the end of cinema-going there, it was the first step towards a far more fragile state and economy in post-colonial Ghana: for a short period of time, Lebanese business owners such as the Ghanem family, who owned the Victory cinema in town, had to negotiate with Ghanaians to take over their businesses (Kobo 2010, 80).¹³⁴

By 1972, General Ignatius Acheampong overthrew Busia's government. He reversed the anti-alien immigration act, suspending the deportation of aliens in Ghana (*ibid*, 83-84). The movement away from anti-alien sentiments reflected anxieties over the loss of revenue from foreign investment. As one news reporter expressed in 1972: "the Busia government had all but stultified our economic growth. Policies based on the premise that Ghana could go it alone have ruined us and lost us friends."¹³⁵ Of importance to the history of Tamale was Acheampong's introduction of "Operation Feed Yourself", a state-sponsored programme centred around local agribusiness. The government promoted large-scale rice farming by subsidising fertilizer and employing modern methods of farming (Mahama 2012, 131; Pellow 2011, 136). Capitalist rice farming began in the Tamale, Savelugu, and Yendi agricultural districts of the Northern Region, where numerous uncultivated river valley lands were opened up to allow for rice farming in the region (Shepherd 1990, 173-174). Commercial rice farming brought new forms of wealth into the region, and altered the movement of labour: chiefs as well as absentee rice farm owners relied on local labour to farm their land, especially young students and urban youth who worked on their farms for a daily wage (Brydon and Legge 1996, 11; Shepherd 1990, 174). For example, in a *Daily Graphic* newspaper headline for 30 December 1974, students in the Tamale area are urged by professionals to consider "seriously becoming farmers in response to the Government's 'Operation Feed Yourself' programme".¹³⁶ Thousands of Tamale youth would be hired on a given day to work in commercial rice farms, moving purchase power into the hands of urban youth at the height of cinema going in the region (Mahama 2012, 137-138; Shepherd 1990, 174; Soeters 2012, 225). Some involved in agribusiness were able to export rice

¹³⁴ For businesses like the Ghanem family's cinemas, the handing over of the business to an indigenous trader (in this case Yahaya Iddi) worked in their favour, as they were able to take the cinema back into their name when the anti-alien act ceased, while other businesses like the Nankani shop in Tamale, who refused to sell their business to local traders, lost their business altogether. See "Ghanaian Business Promotion 1970-1973." PRAAD-Tamale, NRG8/7/82.

¹³⁵ *The Mirror*, 19 February 1972.

¹³⁶ *Daily Graphic*, 30 December 1974, 1.

to other neighbouring countries, bringing even more wealth into the Northern Region and to Tamale in particular (Mahama 2012, 138).

This brief period of prosperity in Tamale coincided with a new availability of foreign music, especially American funk, and the height of cinema going, where Hindi films remained popular alongside the arrival of new action films from Hong Kong (Mahama 2012, 77 and 131; Chernoff 1985, 122). Youth and students who made their money in rice farming began attending the cinema, buying foreign gramophone records, and buying foreign musical instruments such as trombones and trumpets. Many began to make their own music based off of their favourite foreign songs from gramophone records and from the cinema hall. One example of this was the band Bombay Simpa: making money through rice farming, the leader of Bombay Simpa bought instruments including trumpets and trombones, and together with his band, drew on songs from Hindi film songs in the cinema as well as American funk and pop albums to create Simpa songs.¹³⁷ This was not unusual for the genre: Simpa music sampled a range of popular foreign music, with earlier examples including Akan highlife, European foxtrots and waltzes, and songs from concert party theatres, while later, bands incorporated a range of genres, including rumba, soul, blues, meringue and pachanga heard on the radio, and Hindi film songs and dances from the cinema (Abdulai and Chernoff, n.d. a; Chernoff 1979, 129-130; Chernoff 1985, 122; Collins 1985b, 33-36). In his recent memoir, John Mahama, whose family was also involved in the rice business at that time, similarly refers to the influence of foreign music in Tamale in the 1970s. He mentions some artists from the US who were popular in Tamale at that time, including James Brown, Jackson 5 and Otis Reading, as well as popular funk artists from Africa such as Fela Kuti, Bumbaya, Hezole, Uhuru Dance Band, and Geraldo Pino and the Heartbeats (2012, 77 and 131). Mahama outlines how popular phrases from soul and funk music such as “Looka here” were replaced by the Dagbani phrase “Gbubiya” (meaning “hold it”) for Simpa performances and competitions (*ibid*).¹³⁸

In June, 1979, a military coup overthrew Ghana’s government, making Flight Lieutenant J.J. Rawlings head of state. Following a brief period of civilian rule, a second coup took place on 31 December, 1981, where Rawlings reclaimed government under military rule, establishing the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC)

¹³⁷ Interview with Abdul Rayan in Tamale on 8 November 2016.

¹³⁸ Interview with Maira in Tamale on 23 July 2016.

(Kobo 2010). The coup, which lasted until 1984, was a period of severe violence and political instability in Tamale: as a military city, Tamale had three barracks, and Rawlings' soldiers occupied all three barracks during the coup, meaning that Tamale had more soldiers per civilian than any other area in Ghana at this time (Mahama 2012, 216-217). As Mahama recalls of his time spent in Tamale during the coup: "military brutality was perhaps worse in Tamale than anywhere else in the country because of the presence of so many garrisons, especially in relation to the size of the civilian population" (*ibid*). Violence in Tamale was a key factor in the reluctance of many to attend the cinema in those years. Often, the PNDC would arrive at the Rivoli cinema in Tamale and arrest viewers to bring them to work on the farm. In later years, when the curfew extended to a 10pm start, the PNDC banned women from the cinema, a regional rule enforced in Tamale.¹³⁹ One informant recalled of cinema attendance during the coup:

In terms of punishment, the punishment happened more than just one time during the coup – they would come to the cinema, usually with a siren sounding coming from Kamina barracks – if you heard this in town you had to start running towards your house. When they came to the cinema they would lash, and punish those in the cinema, and then take everyone on a lorry to do a punishment, such as clean a school room, a toilet, weeding, farming, and afterwards they would take you to Kamina barracks to lash you. This happened on many Sundays during this period.¹⁴⁰

Curfews at this time threatened the survival of both the music industry and cinema businesses in Ghana. As Plageman notes in terms of urban music events in Accra, the curfew put an end to social gatherings, which were replaced with the consumption of music in private, creating fertile ground for the rapid development of trade in cassette recordings for home use, as well as musical piracy (Plageman 2013, 227). While the 1979 curfew, which lasted only three months, had less of an impact on cinemas, the curfew enforced in 1981, which began by 8pm most evenings, crippled many cinema halls, a pattern that continued until 1984 (McFeely 2015, 2-3).¹⁴¹ Cinema owners were unable to sustain the business, and without knowing when the curfews would cease, overseas distributors were reluctant to sign contracts with Ghanaian cinema businesses (*ibid*, 3). Rawlings remained in power throughout the rest of the 1980s, and continued

¹³⁹ Interview with a former cinema manager in Tamale on 7 November 2015.

¹⁴⁰ Conversation with Indian fan club members on 7 January 2018.

¹⁴¹ Interview with former cinema owner in Accra on 1 October 2016.

to lead after 1992, when the constitution of the Republic of Ghana introduced democratic multiparty elections in the country.

By the late 1980s, Tamale's cinema-going public was in decline. The process of liberalisation and democratisation in the early 1990s further set in motion the rise of neighbourhood video centres, that were often bare rooms with VCRs, TV monitors, and benches in family homes and compounds (Garritano 2013, 96-97; Krings 2013, 311).¹⁴² Video centres became widespread across the continent beginning in the late 1980s (Garritano 2013, 65). In Ghana at that time, the government estimated that there were more than three hundred video centres operating in Accra alone (*ibid*, 65). The entry fee for neighbourhood video centres was much less expensive than a cinema ticket, and they were close to home, meaning that married women and children once discouraged from attending the cinema hall were now able to watch their favourite movies amongst friends (Krings 2013, 311; McFeely 2015, 2-3; Fuglesang 1994, 157). Just as the music industry became confined to private spaces during these years, the demise of the cinema hall and the rise of the video centre was monumental in fragmenting, decentralising, and domesticating forms of public leisure, a topic I explore in more depth in the following chapter (Krings 2013, 322). Democratisation and liberalisation also ushered in new kinds of video technologies as well, that made it possible for young entrepreneurs in urban centres to start making their own videos shown at neighbourhood centres, undercutting foreign media markets and introducing new videos shot in recognisable locations and produced in vernacular languages. In Chapter Seven, I discuss the rise of video culture in Tamale in more depth.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored the layering of various “networked infrastructures” in Tamale, from the building of the Great North Road to the building of cinema buildings and radio kiosks in the city. I have shown how those in positions of power at times limited access to media through varying means, such as urban planning schemes, curfews, or through forced exoduses of “alien” traders and business owners. At other times, these figures either directly or indirectly encouraged the development of media in the city, through cooperation with business owners, attempting to build state cinemas, or by investing in agribusiness models that encouraged migration to the city. The success of these plans depended on the many others involved in the making of

¹⁴² Interview with former cinema owner in Tamale on 2 November 2015.

Tamale's urbanity, including Lebanese and Sindhi merchants, soldiers, traders, and urban dwellers, who at times set into motion the circulation of media, while at other times resisted and curbed the building of infrastructures and the rise of media in the city. As both Lefebvre and Massey make clear, the study of urban space is a study of social complexity and multiplicity, a product of interrelations (Larkin 2008, 6; Lefebvre 1991; Massey 2005). Tamale's urban population continually engaged with and contested matters of land, economy, and social life. The unstable and continually changing relationships forged between different people, ideas, infrastructures, technologies, and goods reveal unique grids of connection that develop quite differently from one urban situation to the next (Tsing 2005; Larkin 2008, 6). Space is thus a productive tool when writing histories of urban popular culture, as it reveals the unique context in which everyday music is created and performed.

A history of Tamale's urban development is not divorced from musical life, but rather these layered infrastructures made possible the varied experiences of media and music explored throughout the rest of this work. This chapter extends the history of mediated music in Tamale back to the mid-twentieth century, where the rise of media in the city was very much a product of postcolonial development projects. Political action, migrant labour, and new infrastructures shaped the ebb and flow of mediated experiences in the town. In the 1930s and 1940s, the rise of Southern urban migration for work meant that migrant labourers could bring gramophones and gramophone records back to Tamale. By the late 1950s, the CPP ushered in cinemas and radio into the city. While Busia's anti-alien immigration act quelled the foreign businesses who brought Hindi films and other media into the region, Acheampong's Operation Feed Yourself in the 1970s brought prosperity to the region, resulting in a rise in foreign popular records around town. The 1980s saw the decline in cinema with the rise of video technologies alongside the violent coup in Tamale, resulting in the domestication of music and film audiences, as well as the privatisation of musical performance into the rooms of houses rather than the streets outside the cinema hall.

This chapter details a public history of Tamale, focussed on the rise of media infrastructures and the political and economic factors that shaped this rise. I have shown how music and media are intimately connected to the study of late colonial and early postcolonial histories of public space, politics, and economics: how roads, shops, and markets, as well as British, Lebanese, and Sindhi foreign workers and merchants, facilitated the circulation of Hindi film songs into the region. This chapter is a

particular kind of urban social history that tells us about media and life in the public sphere. As the next chapter shows, a history of music and media in Tamale must also include the intimate moments of musical encounter in the domestic sphere, a place where music is passed down through generations.

Chapter Five: Hindi Film Songs in the Home: Lullabies, Work Songs, and Intergenerational Musical Experiences

Introduction

In the 1960s, gramophones brought foreign music directly into Dagbamba homes, where new wives, mothers, and their children spent the bulk of their time. The arrival of gramophones in the home was especially significant for married women, who were largely restricted from public leisure activities like the cinema. In these years, women built collections of foreign music records, including popular Hindi film soundtracks such as *Albela* (1951) and *Saqi* (1952).¹⁴³ Young wives and mothers, as well as aunts and grandmothers, adapted Hindi film songs heard from their gramophones and radios into everyday musical practices.¹⁴⁴ They improvised, rearranged, and altered the songs to fit within domestic musical genres, including women's work songs (*tuma-yila*), and lullabies (*biyola-yila*). Because children spent most of their time at home, they heard Hindi film songs sung by their mothers and guardians long before hearing these songs in their filmic context. When those children became parents in the 1980s and 1990s, they passed these domesticated film songs down to their children, commencing a cycle of intergenerational exchange of foreign film songs. Over time, Hindi film songs became associated with domestic life for subsequent generations, to the extent that contemporary youth refer to Hindi film music as “too local”, “women's songs”, and “our mother's songs”.

Following a focus on public leisure in Chapter Four, this chapter looks at the domestic sphere as another important site for the study of media and music in Tamale. In this chapter, I historicise the introduction of mediated music in Tamale's domestic sphere. I suggest that the gendered nature of space and labour influenced the way that mediated music was experienced and put to use in the home. I begin with an overview of family structure, labour, and leisure in pre-colonial and colonial Tamale. I then

¹⁴³ The GBC's Gramophone Library houses other Hindi film records circulating in Ghana at that time, such as *Anmol Ghadi* (1946), *Bhartruhari* (1944), *Khandan* (1942), *Khidki* (1948), and *Naya Tarana* (1943), and *Naujawan* (1951). The early presence of Indian film soundtracks for gramophone is documented in other regional histories on the continent, such as in Uganda, where Gerhard Kubik recalls how Indian popular music records were for sale in the shops of Indian business people in Kampala (1981, 90).

¹⁴⁴ As discussed in Chapter Two, Hindi film songs were particularly resonant with poorer communities, such as the majority Muslim communities in the urban neighbourhoods surrounding central Tamale. Though these women also recalled listening to other foreign music, such as funk and soul music from Nigeria or the US, Hindi film songs appear to have been the most popular music in Tamale between the 1960s and the 1990s, especially in lower-income Muslim homes. It is likely in other regions and even other parts of the city that other kinds of foreign music were having a similar effect.

explore the introduction of mediated music in the domestic sphere, showing how gramophone technologies both shaped and were shaped by domestic labour practices. This section also details subsequent technologies in the home, including cassette players and television use. In the next section, I discuss the adaptation of Hindi film songs in the home, showing how these foreign popular songs were memorised, adapted, and performed by women during cooperative and solitary chores and during childcare. I suggest that these domestic performances of Hindi film songs changed the way that children and youth experienced film songs, as something more intimately connected to daily life in the domestic sphere, rather than a product of the cinema hall. Finally, I briefly explore some of the impacts that gendered listening practices have had on current media practices, where women continue to listen to Hindi film songs on mobile phones in the market and on televisions in the home, while boys and men tend to watch movies in their homes or at video centres, with many moving away from Hindi film viewership altogether due to its now well-established association with women.

The study of Hindi film song circulation in the domestic sphere illuminates a different aspect of everyday musical life in Northern Ghana. Rather than viewing this history as separate from my findings in Chapter Four, I understand the experiences of Hindi film songs in the domestic sphere to be intimately linked to other kinds of social history. As social historian E.P. Thompson argues, the exclusion of the domestic sphere from broader social histories makes history futile, as women's domestic labour is intricately woven into societal change in the public sphere. Simply put, "the 'public' life arises out of the dense determinations of the 'domestic' life" (Thompson 1979, 21). Similarly, James Clifford (1997, 5-6) writes that histories of travel and circulation are only part of a broader social history, that must also include histories of dwelling and domestication. Domestic histories reveal different experiences of labour and migration; for example, women in Tamale must leave their family homes after marriage, while men stay at home. Married women are also implicated in various forms of labour that are quite different from men's, including house chores, childcare, and selling foodstuff and other goods in the market. Such aspects of daily social life are integral to the study of music making in Tamale.

When exploring practices of listening to and performing music during chores and other tasks in the home, I consider experiences of both live and recorded music. Throughout, I draw on Paul Connerton's (1989) notion of "inscribed" and "incorporating" practices to discuss different engagements with performed and

mediated music. Connerton examines mnemonic practices in relation to the human body, and regards “incorporating practices” as an ongoing relationship between sounds and humans, that are kinetic in nature and open to change over time. In contrast, “inscribed practices” such as mediated musical recordings, are unchanging, as they trap the voice “long after the human organism has stopped informing” (*ibid*, 72). In some examples in this chapter, Hindi film songs are experienced as inscribed, when women listen to these songs through recordings on the gramophone, or later on cassette, and through greatest hits albums played from television sets. In these examples, the feedback loop between human bodies common to communal work songs dissolves (Kittler 1999, 22-23). However, unlike the history of work songs in industrial Britain, where communal singing cultures were banned during factory labour and replaced by practices of silent listening, recorded music in Tamale was layered onto living and fluid singing practices in Tamale (Korczynski, Robertson, and Pickering 2013). Just as women listened to film songs in the home, they also memorised, adapted, and performed these songs throughout their daily lives. The boundaries between live and recorded music are porous, as women incorporate and continually adapt Hindi film songs to fit their own needs (Booth and Kuhn 1990, 417-418).

Throughout this chapter, I show how Hindi film songs were adapted as child-directed songs, including lullabies sung to children in the home. For children and youth, these performances strengthen indexical ties between film songs and the domestic sphere. In his exploration of Peircean semiotics, Turino provides an insightful framework for the study of intergenerational musical exchange. In Peircean semiotics, musical indices gain their association with places and people through a constant correlation between object (in this case, home or mother) and sign (in this case, Hindi film songs). When music indexes intimate spaces, later encounters with the same music can affect the listener in intense ways, as the continual, everyday experience of sign and object make the indexical relationship appear real to the listener (Turino 1999, 229). Throughout, I detail a variety of intergenerational encounters with Hindi film songs in the home. I suggest that children’s encounters with Hindi film songs sung by their mothers and guardians afforded similar indexical associations between Hindi film songs and “home” and “women” for future generations.

Turino’s concepts of “cultural formations” and “cultural cohorts” are also useful when exploring the varied generational experiences of Hindi film songs in Tamale. Cultural formations constitute groups who share a majority of habits (such as speaking

the same language, or subscribing to a capitalist ethos); these habits are learned early in life, influencing “individual thought, practice, and decision making” (2008, 112). In Tamale being Dagbamba or being Ghanaian are examples of cultural formations. Out of cultural formations emerge cultural cohorts – groups formed around similar “parts of the self”, such as shared interests, values, or beliefs, that are sometimes (but not always) at odds with the broader values of a cultural formation (*ibid*, 111). For example, Turino writes of the old time music-dance scenes of the US as a cultural cohort that emerged out of 1960s counterculture and “back-to-the-land” ideologies, in opposition to the capitalist cultural formation of the US at that time (*ibid*, 115).

As discussed in Chapter Two, the first group of youth to attend cinemas in Tamale formed a cultural cohort around urban leisure (including cinema, music, dance, fashion, and sport) during in 1960s and 1970s.¹⁴⁵ When cultural cohorts are widespread and pervasive as this one was, habits of the cultural cohort can become habits of the cultural formation for subsequent generations. Turino (*ibid*, 188) writes:

When the practices of a cohort are passed down to a new generation as part of family cultural formations the conceptual lines between cohort and formation begin to blur – or better said, ideas and activities that begin in a cohort become part of a cultural formation at the level of the family. Theoretically if enough family formations are deeply influenced by the habits of thought and practice of a cohort, this can set the stage for the creation of a new formation at a broader level than the family. Family formations thus can provide a bridge between cohorts and the creation of new larger cultural formations. Given these possibilities, cohorts can be, and have been, forces for broader patterns of social innovation.

In early post-colonial Tamale, a substantial number of the cinema-going cultural cohort brought their musical interests home, incorporating these songs into daily life. For their children, Hindi film songs were learned in early life rather than amongst friends at the cinema hall, to the extent that these film songs are considered “too local” for youth seeking new and cosmopolitan musical influences in contemporary Tamale.

Academic work on domestic daily musical practices is limited, and there are several reasons for this. First, ethnomusicology was (and in some ways continues to be) a male-dominated field of research.¹⁴⁶ As is discussed at length in Ellen Koskoff’s edited collection *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (1989), a lack of female researchers skewed broader understandings of musical cultures, particularly in

¹⁴⁵ Cultural cohorts are often times generational (Turino 2008, 111).

¹⁴⁶ Most senior positions are still occupied by men, though things are beginning to slowly change.

regions where strict gender roles apply. In these regions, male researchers have more restricted access to private, women-only spaces. For example, Andrew Pettit (2014, 7) describes difficulties in being accepted into “the intimate and typically private mother-child dynamic” in India. That there are so few female ethnomusicologists in Northern Ghana is part of the reason for this scholarly gap on women’s domestic musical practices. At present, the only large-scale ethnomusicological work on women’s music in Tamale is Katharine Blankenship’s 2014 PhD thesis. Prior to this, Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje’s article on women’s music in Sudanic Africa (1985) and DjeDje’s liner notes in Verna Gillis’ album *Traditional Women’s Music from Ghana* (1981) were the only publications discussing women’s musical experiences in Tamale.

Another reason for the lack of literature on domestic musical experiences has to do with scholarly trends in ethnomusicology. Until recently, West African music scholars explored public and highly regarded musicians and “masters”, with less focus on music in quotidian spaces. This broader trend is found in scholarship on women’s music in West Africa: much important work charts the lives of masterful female musicians, including Lucy Duran’s (2007) work on female Mande artisan-musicians, and Beverly Mack’s (2004) book on female professional performing artists in Northern Nigeria. While Blankenship’s work on women’s songs in Tamale touches briefly on music in domestic life (2014, 83), the bulk of her thesis focuses on female professionals and established dance-drumming genres, including *tora* and *kali-tora*. Histories of domestic engagement with mediated music is an underexplored scholarly topic.

Finally, this scholarly gap also has to do with how scholars understand “work songs”. There is a lack of scholarship exploring the history of women’s work songs in the domestic sphere, perhaps reflecting unconscious assumptions on what constitutes labour. An exception to this is media anthropologists, who have readily engaged with gendered aspects of domestic life. Purnima Mankekar’s (1993) research on gendered viewership of television serials in New Delhi was ground breaking in this regard, as was Minou Fuglesang’s (1994) dissertation on female youth culture in Lamu, Kenya, who coincidentally also notes the influence of Hindi films in domestic life there.¹⁴⁷ However, as discussed in Chapter Two, gendered media anthropology tends to focus on television and film viewership rather than music, and as such, little research has

¹⁴⁷ Similarly in his work on media cultures in Kano, Northern Nigeria, Brian Larkin writes that his informants referred to Indian films as “women’s films” (Larkin 2000, 227).

explored gendered engagements of music in the home, especially with concern to popular recorded music.

Exploring the Gender Dynamics of Family, Labour, and Leisure in Tamale

Family systems and domestic architecture foreground gendered experiences of music in the home, and as such, this section details family systems, domestic architecture, and gender roles in precolonial and colonial Tamale (from 1907 until 1957). In her study of ethnic and territorial borders in North-West Ghana, Carola Lentz writes that precolonial land ownership was quite different from colonial understandings of land tenure: prior to colonialism, people lived within networks of lineal clans, and space was conceived in terms of social relations that grew out of agricultural expansion (2006, 51). The idea of the grid map system (that divided and attached land to individual owners) was introduced with colonial rule (Lentz 2013, 146).

In the precolonial period, Dagbamba family structure was both extended and polygynous. Families were comprised of grandparents, fathers, mothers, aunts, uncles, cousins, and children, who lived communally and shared in domestic and agricultural labour (Ardayfio-Schandorf 2006, 132). During the colonial period, British and German administration challenged these broader conceptions of family and land ownership in an attempt to enforce definitive, physical boundaries between families and between states (Lentz 2006, 20; Ardayfio-Schandorf 2006, 136). Colonial administration also worked to establish the monogamous nuclear family as the standard in the Gold Coast, a major social shift that had residual impact on family structure in the region (Cammaert 2016, 203-204). For example, the nuclear family model undermined support networks embedded within traditional extended family life, where childcare and agricultural labour were shared amongst family members (Ardayfio-Schandorf 2006, 135).

Throughout the colonial period, Islam was growing in influence and popularity in Northern Ghana. Despite colonial pressures to adopt monogamy in Dagbon, Islam reinforced and secured the longstanding practice of polygyny, affording religious legitimacy to an extended family model (*ibid*, 132-141; Bogweh and Bellwood-Howard 2016, 48; Prah 1995, 208). Similarities between indigenous and Islamic family structures are evidenced in Northern Ghanaian architectural history. As Deborah Pellow details, the Dagbamba architectural idiom traditionally comprised round, mud-brick

rooms with thatched roofs in circular, walled compounds, with a room for each wife, a room for the husband, and additional rooms for other relatives (2011, 137).¹⁴⁸ All mud-brick rooms face towards a shared courtyard, and non-residents enter the courtyard through a larger circular building, known as a *zong* (*ibid*; Apotsos 2016, 106). Living arrangements in Tamale's central neighbourhoods are similar to Islamic housing elsewhere in the world, such as in Muslim villages of Northern Lebanon, where "home" comprises a set of enclosures and rooms shared by an extended family, facing towards a communal court yard (Gilsenan 1992, 203). The ways in which colonial administration build their homes in Tamale reveals competing notions of nuclear/extended family life between colonial administration and Dagbamba residents. While homes built for colonial administration in the 1920s and 1930s adapted the traditional rotund nature of Dagbamba architecture, the layout of colonial houses is still nuclear in nature, without a shared, inward facing court yard or extended rooms for various family members, as is evidenced in Figure 22 below.

¹⁴⁸ In polygamous homes, women's rooms are closest to the husband's room based on the seniority of the wife (Tamale Kumbungu Survey 1969, 9).



Figure 23 A colonial home in Tamale.

Caption: Colonial home near the Regional Commission office. According to those living in the area, this building was built sometime in the 1920s or 1930s, and adopted the style of local housing. Colonial homes in Tamale are considerably spaced out from one another, and were not built for extended family use. Image taken in September, 2016.



Figure 24 “Tamale 1936.”

Caption: This photograph shows an entrance to a house through the zong. On the right hand side, you can see how the rooms are connected together by small mud walls. Image from the Basel Mission Archives.

While the construction material and shape of homes are changing in contemporary Tamale (mud-brick rooms are being replaced by concrete rectangular rooms, and thatched roofing is changing to aluminium), the overarching principle of a communal family arrangement remain similar:



Figure 25 View of a Contemporary Home

Caption: A view of a contemporary home, with concrete rooms facing a courtyard space. Image taken in Tamale, October 2016.

Along with extended family structures, the gendered make-up of “home” in Tamale is significant to domestic musical life, as the gendered nature of space dictates what kind of music children are exposed to. Dagbon is a patrilineal society, with the male as the head of the household, holding rights over land tenure (Blankenship 2014, 48; Yoggu 2015, 3). In the polygamous home, wives each have a room, where they live with their respective children, while the husband has his own room (Pellow 2011, 137). Female children sleep in their mother’s room until marriage, while boys stay in their mother’s room until they are old enough (somewhere between the age of five and ten) to move to another room with an older male family member, such as an uncle or older cousin (*ibid*; Tamale Kumbungu Survey 1969, 9). While daughters move to live with their husband after marriage, male children stay within their family home; in preparation for marriage, men build their own room in the family home, provided they have space and money to do so (Blankenship 2014, 51; Bogweh and Bellwood-Howard 2016, 46). Women’s inability to own land in Tamale encourages their participation in marriage (as it ensures them access to their own space), and further guarantees their labour in household reproductive tasks (Bogweh and Bellwood-Howard 2016, 41).

Changes in family structure, such as the death of a parent or a divorce, complicate the gendered experiences of youth in Tamale. Typically following divorce, children stay with their father while the mother moves back to her family home. However, there are instances where mothers bring their children with them when moving home after divorce. In this situation, boys stay in their mother or grandmother's room much longer into adolescence, and are subsequently teased by peers for spending too much time around women, sometimes being called *payaba-leliga* (women cockroach). Men who enjoy Hindi film songs are similarly teased for being *payaba-leliga*, a link I explore in more depth later in this chapter.

Leisure time and social interaction are also gendered in Tamale. Married adults do not normally form friendships with the opposite sex, except with relatives (Blankenship 2014, 75). Married women's leisure time is less structured and usually interwoven with domestic labour, such as socialising with other women or co-wives during food preparation, walking to the market, or going to fetch water. Just before prayer at sunset (*maghrib* prayer), married women cook in the shared courtyard, and following prayer, they tend to the children.¹⁴⁹ During my fieldwork, it was common for married women to be in their rooms preparing to sleep following the final prayer, as their mornings begin before sunrise with sweeping the common areas of the house following morning (*fajr*) prayer.¹⁵⁰ In the morning, women make sure children have been fed, washed, and attend school or are otherwise occupied (*ibid*, 65). Throughout the day, married women are busy with household chores, childcare, and selling produce and goods in the market or working as road-side food vendors (*ibid*, 66; Clark 2010; Sheldon 1996).

In varied Islamic contexts, boundaries of the communal courtyard shift between private and public throughout the day, dependent on the kinds of activities taking place in the courtyard (such as cooking or laundering), and one's social status in relation to these activities (age, gender, occupation) (Gilsenan 1992, 203). When women are cooking and socialising in the courtyard in Tamale, men tend to move outside of the home to socialise with other men in the street, usually between 15.30 (after *asr* prayer) and 18.00 (*maghrib* prayer).¹⁵¹ In Salamba, the neighbourhood where I lived, most men

¹⁴⁹ In polygamous families, wives generally cook in rotation and sleep in their husband's room on the day they cook (Chernoff 2014, 4).

¹⁵⁰ There are, of course, exceptions, as some women work in roadside stalls at night selling street food.

¹⁵¹ Though farming was once the main job for most living in the region, a combination of economic struggles, a lack of employment opportunities, and the impact of environmental factors on farming have impacted male employment in the city, leaving many men unable to provide for their families (Haas

socialise with other men at communal meeting points to play games of mancala or ludo. Blankenship echoes a similar pattern from her experience staying in Lamashegu, another neighbourhood in Tamale, noting men chatting and playing games at the roadside while women cleaned and looked after children (Blankenship 2014, 66). Following evening prayer, younger men participate in social activities outside the home, such as musical events, playing games, political party meetings, or generally socialising with friends.

Music making in Dagbon is also a gendered activity. Most instruments, including membranophones, chordophones, and aerophones are usually played by men, although women sometimes play gourd rattles (DjeDje 1981, 3).¹⁵² Live instrumental musical performances often take place amongst men, while women more typically perform vocal songs in the home and at major life events (*ibid*). In Afghanistan, the separation of the sexes in social life influences musical practice: as child care is the “exclusive domain of women and girls”, girls have a more extended exposure to domestic music (Doubleday and Baily 1995, 432-436). Similar patterns were observed in North India and Pakistan in the 1980s and 1990s, where a gender-divided social sphere influenced both girls’ and boys’ future musical practices (Qureshi 1999, 66). In Tamale, women’s primary responsibilities of household chores and child care are reflected in their musical activities: in the home, women learn to sing “courting songs, lullabies, and music sung by mothers to older children for recreation and educational purposes” (DjeDje 1981, 3). As girls live with their mothers and female relatives until marriage, they are exposed to more vocal songs in the home than their male counterparts.

2016, 27 and 108). At the same time, the rise in unemployment has afforded men with more time for leisure and socialising.

¹⁵² In their work on music and gender, Marcia Herndon and Suzanne Zeigler write how ethnographers’ emphasis on women’s music as largely vocal rather than instrumental has limited the body of knowledge on women’s involvement with instrumental music more broadly (Herndon and Zeigler 1990, 5).



Figure 26 Young men play a game of oware in Tamale in July 2013

Young men play a game of *oware* (a version of mancala) around 16:00 as other men begin to gather around to watch inside the family courtyard. It is more common for men to play outside of the family home, however this was my *oware* set and I was sitting inside the courtyard. In the background, women sit together around a fire, talking to each other while cooking dinner.

Unlike more conservative Muslim regions such as Northern Nigeria, where cinema audiences were mainly male (Larkin 2000, 227), both men and women were permitted to attend the cinema hall in post-colonial Tamale, and seating was mixed-gender. However, Muslim women's access to the cinema changed after marriage. While young, unmarried women with fewer household responsibilities attended the cinema, married women had to keep up with a new range of duties, including child rearing and care, cooking, cleaning, laundering, and fetching water. This never-ending work curbed married women's cinema attendance. For example, Nafisa, a woman now in her fifties living in one of Tamale's central urban neighbourhoods, explained how she never had the time to go to Rivoli cinema, though she did have time to listen to film songs via her cassette player and to sing along as well:

Katie: Did you ever go to the cinema hall?

Nafisa: I never had time to go to the Rivoli...I was always busy working.

Katie: What did you have to do?

Nafisa: I had to go to market, I had to go fetch water, and water was very scarce then. After that, I had to cook, and wash, there are so many things to do. When you have done all of these things, you are too tired.

Katie: Did you have cassettes?

Nafisa: Yes, we had them, very much! I liked *Bhagavat* (1982), and *Andha Kanoon* (1983), and *Disco Dancer* (1982). We had the cassettes, we had many. I still have some.

[*Nafisa goes to find and show her collection of cassettes*].

Katie: When would you listen to these songs?

Nafisa: During the night, we would listen and sleep.

Katie: Did you ever sing the songs?

Nafisa: Yes, I used to sing. I didn't understand it, but I like the way the melody goes.¹⁵³

Women's labour was not the only barrier to cinema attendance: women also had to ask their husbands for permission to leave their house after dark. In interviews during my fieldwork, women frequently recalled that after they were married, they were not allowed to attend the cinema without their husbands' consent. For example, Khadijah, a woman now in her early sixties, remembered her time at the cinema in the 1970s: "sometimes I would go with my husband, but when my husband was not there, I could not go. I'm a married person, so I don't want to go out like that without my husband's consent."¹⁵⁴ In another conversation, Samira, a woman also in her sixties, explained that while some husbands would not allow their wives to attend the cinema hall, some wives went to the cinema with their husband, though "you had to go with your husband."¹⁵⁵ Hawwa, who is of a similar age, explained that similar to her friends', her husband was violent towards her when she went to the cinema on her own, and so instead of going to the cinema, she listened to Hindi film songs at home.¹⁵⁶

The violence Hawwa refers to may be part of general societal rules regarding married women's whereabouts in the evening: for example, my female friends often lamented how they could not join in on evening events, such as film screenings or political meetings, as their husbands would not permit it. However, given the period which Hawwa is discussing (the late 1970s into the 1980s), it is also possible her husband was reacting to J.J. Rawlings' military coups. As detailed in Chapter Four, cinema going decreased in Tamale in these years, a result of evening curfews as well as

¹⁵³ Interview with Nafisa in Tamale on 4 November 2016.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Khadijah in Tamale on 14 January 2018.

¹⁵⁵ Interview with Samira in Tamale on 17 December 2017.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Hawwa in Tamale on 24 December 2017; as I detail in more depth later in this chapter, married women's access to films in Ghana and elsewhere on the continent changed in the late 1980s with the rise of neighbourhood video centres (Fuglesang 1994, 157).

violent punishments for those who attended the cinemas. PNDC soldiers in Tamale policed women's attendance in the cinema halls, who were lashed because "they were meant to be at home cooking".¹⁵⁷ According to the former manager of Rivoli cinema, the restrictions on women's attendance in the cinema hall resulted in a largescale conflict between soldiers and the public, to the point where the regional administration made a public radio announcement that women were in fact allowed to attend the cinema hall.¹⁵⁸ Restrictions on married women's movement to the cinema reveals underlying anxieties over urban women's continued labour in the home.

The Introduction of Mediated Music in Tamale's Domestic Sphere

Gramophones arrived to Tamale in the 1950s, offering a new form of entertainment in the domestic sphere.¹⁵⁹ Given the restrictions on public leisure for married women, young women began to expect gramophones as part of the marriage agreement.¹⁶⁰ In countless oral history interviews and archival notes from the early post-colonial period, men recall purchasing a gramophone for their home to attract a wife, or to keep current wives from "running away". For example, in an archival note from the 1950s, ethnomusicologist Kwabena Nketia wrote that cocoa farmers in rural areas of the Gold Coast were travelling South "to buy gramophones for their wives" (1956, 194). One interviewee recalled to me how in the 1960s, his father bought two gramophones to maintain peace between co-wives.¹⁶¹ Similarly, in a 1959 archival recording from the J.H. Kwabena Nketia sound archive, one Northern Ghanaian man explains:

If you happen to go and marry somewhere, and there is no entertainment, how can you and your wife be happy in the house? She will be so lonely, that sometimes, she runs away from you. So, we should all try to get something that will amuse ourselves in the house. That's why you often see some people having gramophones. When he's annoyed, or she is annoyed, she goes to take it, and then starts playing with it – and such a thing gets you happy.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁷ Interview with former cinema manager on 7 November 2015; Conversation with Indian fan club members on 7 January 2018.

¹⁵⁸ Interview with former cinema manager on 7 November 2015.

¹⁵⁹ Though it is possible that gramophones arrived earlier, the earliest archival notes on gramophones in Northern Ghana that I could find are from the 1950s.

¹⁶⁰ On the continent, gramophone records have been in circulation since the early twentieth century. By 1910, the Gramophone Company (HMV) organized a retail system throughout Sub-Saharan Africa (Harrev 2003, 717).

¹⁶¹ Interview with Mahdi Alhassan on 24 December 2017.

¹⁶² "Drumming from Dagomba Land Hourglass, Simpa." 1959. J.H. Kwabena Nketia Sound Archive, file AWG-DG-06 (IAS-GH-170).

As the above archival informant notes, husbands believed that providing recorded music to accompany domestic labour in the home ensured their wives' happiness; in this instance, music was used as a "technology of the self", introduced in order to achieve certain emotional states (DeNora 2000, 50). Similar processes are detailed in other studies of domestic life in the mid to late twentieth century: Kate Lacey notes how, in the context of interwar Germany, new listening technologies such as the gramophone and radio were employed to make daily chores "more pleasant" and "less isolated" for housewives, so that women were less likely to abandon their domestic duties (2000, 284). Dorothy Hobson (1980, 93) writes of the structureless-ness of housework for wives in 1970s Britain, where listening to the radio accompanied everyday domestic labour, including child care and housework. Similar to housewives in interwar Germany (Lacey 2000) and 1970s Britain (Hobson 1980), mothers and wives in Tamale listened to Hindi film songs with a purpose: to avoid boredom and improve one's mood, while also increasing efficiency in their work.

Prior to the introduction of gramophones, women in Tamale sang songs during domestic labour. As the aforementioned archival recording from the J.H. Kwabena Nketia sound archive details of women's music in the home:

In the house, oftenly [sic] you see your wife, singing, going up and down, going down to the kitchen, even coming back to the store room, whilst cooking, when going to help fetch water by the riverside, you find her singing all the time, just trying to make herself happy.¹⁶³

Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje further notes that in post-colonial Tamale, women sang in the domestic sphere in order to make work (such as the grinding of corn or pounding of pestles in a mortar) less monotonous and more efficient (DjeDje 1981, 3). As a "technology of the self", work songs are employed not only to improve one's mood, but also to extend the body's capacity, improving endurance, or enhancing one's coordination (DeNora 2000, 107; Batt-Rawden and DeNora 2005, 290-291). The collection catalogue at the University of Ghana's J.H. Kwabena Nketia sound archive hints at the range of functions that songs had in collective labour tasks amongst Northern Ghanaian women: there are recordings from 1960 titled "Northern Women's Floor Beating Song", "Dagarti Women's Grinding Song", and "Worksong: Nandom Women's Grinding Song and Floor Beating Song".¹⁶⁴ In the broader literature on work

¹⁶³ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ "Northern Women's Floor Beating Song." J.H. Kwabena Nketia Sound Archive, Accra, AWGX 28B; "Dagarti Women's Grinding Song." J.H. Kwabena Nketia Sound Archive, Accra, AWGX 28 B;

songs, scholars have shown how songs are used in a variety of African contexts to motivate labour, including cooperative songs for communal tasks such as hoeing, weeding, pounding, or floor-beating, as well as more solitary tasks, such as grinding corn or pounding rice (Finnegan 2012, 224; Sidikou and Hale 2014, 9). Ruth Finnegan writes that the pattern of singing to accompany labour seems to occur “universally in African societies” (2012, 224), though reflecting on Korczynski’s (2013) exploration of pre-industrial work songs in the US and Britain, singing to accompany labour is a more global pre-industrial phenomenon.

Not long after the introduction of gramophones into the domestic sphere, these new technologies became a part of domestic labour through inscribed listening practices.¹⁶⁵ Instead of singing, women began to listen to recorded music while working. For example, in conversation with Fuseini Abdulai Braimah in 2017, he recalled how women used to sing songs whilst plastering the walls of their homes, with a mixture of shea nut oil, cow dung, and gravel. During these times, women from various houses would come together and sing to encourage efficiency while re-plastering walls. This was a form of shared labour, where each woman’s house would be re-plastered on a rotating basis by the collective group.¹⁶⁶ As children often took part, they experienced these songs from an early age. Smaller children might have heard these songs while being wrapped around their mother or relative during communal labour, as is evidenced in this photograph below:

“Worksong: Nandom Women’s Grinding Song and Floor Beating Song.” J.H. Kwabena Nketia Sound Archive, Accra, AWGX30.

¹⁶⁵ Similarly in Malawi, Enoch Mvula writes how the rhythmical nature of work songs encourages women to work “harder, faster, and with more enjoyment” (Mvula 1986, 234).

¹⁶⁶ Conversation with Fuseini Abdulai Braimah on 5 December 2017.



Figure 27 “Communal Work. Preparing Clay, 1910”

Caption: Location is somewhere in Northern Ghana, possibly Tamale. Accessed from the Basel Mission Image Archive.

In conversation with Abdul Ghafaar, who grew up near Kamina military barracks on the outskirts of town in the 1960s, he recalled how his father’s gramophone changed such practices of group singing in his neighbourhood. Around that time, his father played the “latest music” on his gramophone, using a clay pot from the house as an amplifier. The music would attract women and children from neighbouring houses, who would “come and dance and enjoy the entertainment.” Ghafaar’s father “also put them to work, fetching maize and groundnuts to shell while listening to the music, to make work lighter.”¹⁶⁷ Rather than women coming together between already organised social networks, the gramophone airing into the community collected new communities of women and children, willing to work for entertainment. Gramophones became a tool through which new forms of labour were sought, cutting across pre-existing labour networks. Of course, the gramophone changed the kinds of songs listened to and performed by both women and children during group labour as well, a thread I pick up later in this chapter.

¹⁶⁷ Conversation with Abdul Ghafaar on 29 August 2016.

While the introduction of music technologies certainly impacted domestic music-making in Tamale, they are not wholly responsible for changing domestic musical practices. One must also consider the shifting materiality of the home following the rise of imported, manufactured goods in Tamale. For example, the wall plastering songs described above are no longer necessary for homes made of cement walls and aluminium roofing. Likewise, work songs for grinding flour mentioned above are less common now that most flour is ground in nearby mills (Blankenship 2014, 83). Though work songs in Tamale were not impacted to the same degree as in countries like England that experienced industrialisation and the rise of factory labour, changes to the materiality of the home alters musical practice, further highlighting music's intrinsic relationship to gender, labour, and space in the domestic sphere.

In the 1980s, cassette players replaced gramophones, offering a similar technology for inscribed listening practices. Given that cassette tapes were relatively inexpensive and easily duplicated in the market, Hindi film cassettes became widely available during these years:



Figure 28 A Hindi Film Cassette Collection in Tamale



Figure 29 A Hindi Film Cassette Collection in Tamale

In more recent years, televisions have functioned similarly to gramophones and cassette players, providing inscribed music that accompanies daily chores in the domestic sphere. Though many women own televisions and have collections of Hindi films on VHS and DVD, many married women simply do not have time to sit and watch entire films, that run upwards of three hours. Instead, married women listen to locally curated compilation DVDs of Hindi film music videos while doing chores, turning the volume up to its loudest. Unlike film viewership, which requires full visual and physical attention, the increasing availability of compilation videos in Tamale's markets, such as the very best of Bollywood songs DVD pictured below, makes clear the importance of listening to, rather than watching Hindi films for women with heavy workloads.¹⁶⁸ An

¹⁶⁸ By the early 2000s, the arrival of writeable video technologies like CDs and DVDs meant that songs popular throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s could be burned onto CD or DVD and recirculated for purchase in Tamale. During the early 2000s, businesses in Accra who were aware of Hindi films' persisting popularity in the north began to pirate popular Hindi films of the post-colonial period for sale and circulation in majority Muslim cities like Tamale. Women buy greatest hits video album

example of this is found in Audio-Visual Example 1, where a married woman who has just finished mopping the floor of her room goes outside to take laundry off the line.¹⁶⁹ During these chores, she listens to the song “Yeh Duniya Ek Numbri” (This World is Number One) from the 1976 film *Dus Numbri* (Number One) on a compilation DVD, with the volume turned up to the highest level so that it is audible in the courtyard. Similar processes are noted in Purnima Mankekar’s work on media in New Delhi in the early 1990s. She shows how women kept up with their favourite shows by listening to the television, turning the volume up on their favourite serials while cooking, laundering, washing dishes, and sweeping (1993, 548). As Mankekar suggests, the use of the television as a listening technology in such examples destabilises occularcentric notions of the mediated experience (*ibid*). In other words, the role of the television as a listening tool highlights women’s aural engagement with film.

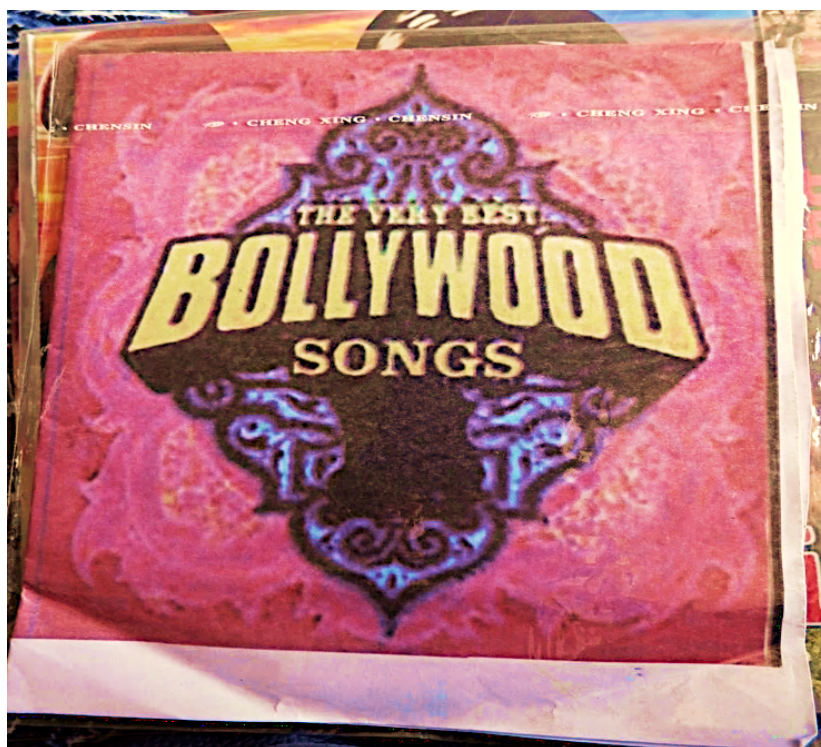


Figure 30 The Very Best Bollywood Songs DVD

Caption: This DVD is a locally produced music video compilation featuring Hindi film songs popular in Tamale. It is widely available for purchase in Tamale, and is played by women in their homes, and also via radio presenters, who use this DVD for material on their Indian music radio shows. Though they use the term Bollywood on the cover, this is not a term used in day to day parlance in Tamale, and the songs on the compilation are all pre-1990.

compilations such as the “Bollywood Greatest Hits” to play on their televisions while doing household chores.

¹⁶⁹ This video was recorded in Salamba, Tamale in July 2016.



Figure 31 Music playing from television inside the home

Caption: A “Best of 1960s” Hindi film song video compilation soundtrack plays from the television in a woman’s room while she and her friends are in the courtyard, preparing to go and sell medicine and CDs in the market.

Of the academic works that explore women’s twentieth century experiences of mediated music in the home, the majority focus on the radio (Hobson 1980; Lacey 2014; Lin 2012). However, when I asked elderly women and men to recall their earliest memories listening to commercial music in their homes during oral history interviews in Tamale in 2016 and 2017, most discussed their experiences listening to the gramophone. When asked about radio listenership, many noted how the GBC played locally recorded music, usually Hausa or Ashanti songs, and it was rare to hear foreign popular music on the radio. For example, Maira recalled of her childhood in the 1960s that to listen to foreign music, you needed a gramophone: “when I was small, there was a radio box near my home, and I would hear Dagbani songs and Ashanti songs on the radio. They didn’t play Indian songs, if you heard Indian songs coming from the house, it would be on the gramophone.”¹⁷⁰ While foreign music, such as Hindi film songs, played from time to time on the radio, this was relatively infrequent. As Khadijah recalled, the GBC “sometimes played Indian songs on the radio, *biela, biela* [small, small], but mostly they played local songs and highlife.”¹⁷¹ As mentioned in Chapter

¹⁷⁰ Interview with Maira on 14 January 2018.

¹⁷¹ Interview with Khadijah on 14 January 2018.

Two, the reason for this was that radio broadcasting was heavily linked to the development of national culture in Ghana in the early post-colonial period.

While popular music was less commonly heard on GBC broadcasts, early programming targeted women listeners through the creation of women's listening segments. There was a women's magazine for each major broadcast language on GBC, so depending on the date and time, different women's magazines aired in Ga, Ewe, Nzema, Twi, Hausa, or Dagbani.¹⁷² Beginning in the 1950s, women-directed programming was a common broadcasting practice both in Ghana and elsewhere. In Singapore, special committees were set up to consider the preferences of women and children, and to create programmes for female listeners in the home (Lin 2012, 182). In interwar Germany, women's radio programmes were "designed to weave into the routines of the household" (Lacey 2000, 285).¹⁷³ Similarly, Dagbani and Hausa women's shows (that were often combined into one segment) punctuated significant points of the Muslim week. As is evidenced in the GBC's annual *Radio Review* for 1964, the Hausa and Dagbani women's magazine aired weekly on Thursdays as well as Fridays at 15.30, directly after *jumu'ah* prayers, when Muslim children were not at school.¹⁷⁴ Just as German women's music programmes were designed to fit the routines of the German household, the Hausa and Dagbani women's hour strategically aired at times when Muslim women were at home listening.

From the onset of programming for female Muslim listeners, Hindi film songs were heard on Hausa and Dagbani Women's magazine programmes.¹⁷⁵ Many of my interviewees recalled that Hindi film songs appeared on air at specific times throughout the week.¹⁷⁶ For example, Aliko Abubakari, who lived in Tamale's Hausa Zongo in the 1950s and 1960s, remembered hearing the radio box near her house playing Indian songs "on Thursdays and Fridays. They were old old songs, from *Albela* (1951), *Sangam* (1954), *Saqi* (1952)."¹⁷⁷ Similarly, Jeet recalled that in 1968 when he was going to school, he would only hear Hindi film songs playing from the radio box

¹⁷² See *Ghana Radio Review*. 1964. Ghana Broadcasting System, and Ghana Radio & Television Corporation, Accra.

¹⁷³ Similar trends continue today: in present-day London, BBC Radio 4 continues to have a women's hour that airs at 10.00 on weekdays and at 16.00 on Saturdays.

¹⁷⁴ *Jumu'ah* prayers, otherwise known as Friday prayers, are congregational prayers that Muslims hold every Friday afternoon. These radio broadcasts were produced by Habiba Ibrahim, and were repeated on Mondays during *asr* prayer.

¹⁷⁵ This occurred in Northern Nigeria as well: Hindi film songs were played on radio broadcasts for Muslim communities from as early as the late 1940s (Larkin 2008, 52 and 260).

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Feiyaz Razak on 24 December 2017.

¹⁷⁷ Interview with Aliko Abubakari on 15 December 2017.

outside his house on Thursdays: they would “sit and talk and talk and tell the film title and play the song, during the Dagbani section.”¹⁷⁸ While there is little concrete evidence as to what songs were played on air during the Dagbani and Hausa women’s magazine, one record stored in the GBC Gramophone Library in Accra offers a clue: inscribed on the soundtrack record for the Hindi film *Bhartrahari* (1946) is “Hausa women’s sig [signature] tune”. The inscription, which is written twice over in yellow chalk and blue ink, indicates that this record was the introductory song for the women’s programme each week:



Figure 32 Gramophone Record
Image of the soundtrack *Bhartrahari* (1946), with “Hausa Women’s Sig Tune” inscribed on the front. Image taken in September 2016 at the GBC Gramophone Library.

Adapting Hindi Film Songs for Domestic Use in Tamale

In the post-colonial period, women began to memorise and sing Hindi film songs in their daily lives independent from listening technologies such as gramophones, cassette players, or television sets. They performed these songs during chores and as lullabies to soothe children. As incorporated practice, Hindi film songs were often sung spontaneously, improvised in the moment to soothe a child or get a task done. Rather than creating new lyrics for film song melodies, women phonetically memorised Hindi lyrics, despite not understanding them. At first listen, these domestic adaptations might

¹⁷⁸ Interview with Jeet on 24 October 2016.

sound similar to the original film song. However, these domestic adaptations are quite different from the original film song. As I show in several music examples throughout this section, women improvise and alter film songs to fit new domestic functions, shortening the song, repeating key lines multiple times, and changing the Hindi lyrics to phonetic iterations of the text. In what follows, I explore the various contexts in which women perform their own versions of Hindi film songs in the home. I begin with an exploration of how Hindi film songs were sung in day to day life, and then turn to an exploration of Hindi film songs used for lullabies and child-directed songs. Throughout, I examine the gender dynamics through which Hindi film songs are experienced and performed in Tamale, and subsequently passed down through future generations.

In Tamale, *tuma-yila* (work songs) are a long-standing musical practice; these songs are usually rhythmic, accompanying the movements of the body during repetitive physical tasks, including solitary tasks such as laundry or cooking, or group tasks including re-plastering walls or shelling groundnuts. The advent of gramophones saw the incorporation of foreign film songs into Tamale's work song repertoire, as women began to phonetically memorise and perform Hindi film songs during their daily chores. For example, in a conversation with Samira, a former banana seller who worked nearby the cinema in the 1970s and 1980s, she explained her process for listening to songs in the home following marriage in the late 1970s:

Katie: After marriage, did you sing in your house?

Samira: Yes, I used to do that when I was doing my house chores, like washing and laundering. I didn't want to get bored, or feel lazy, so I would sing Indian songs while I'm washing.¹⁷⁹

Similarly, in this portion of an interview with Mahdi Alhassan, a man born in 1955, he recalls how his mother would both listen to and sing film songs in the home:

Katie: Would your mother sing the Indian songs, or only listen?

Mahdi: Yes, she was singing the songs.

Katie: When would she sing the songs?

Mahdi: When she was washing, she would listen and then be singing along.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ Interview with Samira on November 7 2016.

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Mahdi Alhassan on 13 September 2016.

In numerous interviews and conversations, women recalled that in post-colonial Tamale, they began to phonetically memorise Hindi film song lyrics, and sing these songs while doing chores in the home. Film songs were slowly incorporated into a pre-existing domestic musical genre. When parents began to sing Hindi film songs in the home during everyday chores and tasks, these songs were heard by children living in the household. As parents did not allow children to go to the cinema hall until they reached adulthood, many born in the 1950s and 1960s first encountered Hindi film songs in the home, from parents and guardians who listened to and sang these songs around their children. For example, a man in his sixties named Jeet recalled how his first time attending the cinema was not until he was eighteen years of age, in the mid-1970s. He had, however, heard Hindi film songs many times before attending the cinema, as his mother loved to sing Hindi film songs.¹⁸¹ He recalled: “My mother, when she was sitting down, the only songs she could sing were Indian songs.”¹⁸²

Perhaps the most significant change to work songs in this context was the communicative function of the songs. In a variety of regional case studies, scholars have noted how work songs are used to communicate stories, happenings, and issues within the community. Songs can communicate criticisms, histories, announcements, and public discourse; they can be an ideal platform for venting frustration or espousing controversies in a less confrontational way, disguised through metaphor and irony (Haruna 2000 145; Hale and Sidikou 2014, 7). In these instances, song lyrics are fluid and open to change. As Vijaya Ramaswamy (1993) writes of Tamil work songs, singing connects workers to the daily occurrences of the community. In Malawi, Chewa women’s corn pounding songs provide a platform for negotiating relationships; the songs “function as a newspaper at the pounding session and in the larger community” (Mvula 1986, 233). In Ghana, lullabies are not only used to sooth children, but also to address the mother’s daily thoughts and concerns, including grievances directed at her wider social networks (Agawu 2016, 86; see also Egblewogbe 1975, 43). With the advent of recorded music and the popularity of Hindi film songs in Tamale’s homes, the communicative function of work songs began to change.

¹⁸¹ Conversation with Jeet on 25 October 2015.

¹⁸² Interview with Jeet on 24 October 2016.

Some grandmothers in post-colonial Tamale were particularly wary of the impact of music technologies on domestic music, especially with concern to their grandchildren. For example, Rabiyya, who was born in the early 1960s, is a big fan of Hindi films, singing them nearly all the time and religiously attending radio fan club meetings. She recalled how her mother (who was a professional singer) discouraged her from singing Hindi film songs to her new born children. Rabiyya's mother, who would have been born sometime in the 1940s, disagreed with the singing of foreign music like Hindi film songs within Dagbamba domestic music making, citing anxieties over the influence of foreign recorded music on local practices. In this portion of an interview with Rabiyya about her engagement with Hindi film songs in her daily life, she detailed this intergenerational tension:

Katie: What kind of music do you enjoy most?

Rabiyya: Indian songs. Whenever I sing, it's Indian.

Katie: Can you remember if your parents sang any Indian songs to you?

Rabiyya: No, I started it. Though my parents used to go to the cinema, but they wouldn't be singing. But I would go and come and be singing.

Katie: What about your children? When your children were small, did you ever use Indian songs to calm them down?

Rabiyya: Yes, that's what I used to do. I would sing to calm the child. But my mother said that I would spoil the children.

Katie: Why would you spoil them?

Rabiyya: [My mother] would just say that we shouldn't be singing such songs to the children.

Katie: What kinds of songs would your mother sing to you?

Rabiyya: They were singing Dagbani songs. You know, in Dagbani, we have lullabies. So those are the songs my mother used to sing.¹⁸³

The concerns of Rabiyya's mother underscores the perceived intimacy and influence that lullabies have on future generations, and thus the impact that the incorporation of foreign music like Hindi film songs might have on future musical practices in the region.

¹⁸³ Interview with Rabiyya Abdul on 24 December 2017.

The social significance of lullabies in the home has been studied in diverse contexts. For example, in her study of Somali communities in London, Emma Brinkurst notes that lullabies emplace children within their familial and larger Somali community in King's Cross (2012, 173-174). Because Somali women perform child care duties within the community in King's Cross, their musical performances within the home are influential in the reproduction of cultural and musical practices over time (*ibid*, 180). Veronica Doubleday similarly writes of music in Afghani homes as a "main enculturating experience" for children, forming "the basic reservoir of music" for children (1995, 443). Lullabies in Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata also have a unique sociocultural influence on children, as they are often the first musical performances children experience (Pettit 2014, 5-6). Kofi Agawu (2016, 86) explores the use of lullabies in varied African contexts, and suggests that lullabies function both to address and comfort children (see also Egblewogbe 1975, 43).¹⁸⁴ Finnegan writes about the way in which lullabies are affected by social class: she notes how upper-class Ngoni mothers in Malawi and Nyoro mothers in Uganda often give their children to nurse-maids of other linguistic backgrounds for childcare; as such, children grow up learning a diverse range of songs in the varied languages of their nurse-maids (2012, 292). In Tamale, the first music children hear are songs performed by their mothers or guardians (Blankenship 2014, 83).

There is little in-depth research on lullabies in Northern Ghana, and at present, the only available archival example of a Dagbamba lullaby is "Mbia Cheli Vuri Yee Yee" (child, stop crying), recorded by Verna Gillis in Tamale in 1976.¹⁸⁵ As Verna Gillis writes in her liner notes, this recording is performed out of context, with call and response from other women rather than between child and guardian in one's room. Even still, the song "Mbia Cheli Vuri Yee Yee" hints at some structural elements of lullabies in the region: melodic segments are short and repeated, with acapella vocals. A lullaby may involve two or three pitches, and usually uses small intervals (Agawu 2016, 214). Lullabies are thus improvisatory, short, and repeatable, and like other participatory songs, are meant to be easily learned and transferred between generations (Booth and Kuhn 1990, 417). As is clear in the examples outlined below, lullabies are also useful in tracing subsequent generations' encounters with the musical practices of

¹⁸⁴ Agawu (1987, 410) makes clear the gendered nature of lullabies, that are "normally sung by adult women, usually mothers or other females performing motherly functions".

¹⁸⁵ See track 206 on the album "Traditional Women's Music from Ghana: Ewe, Fanti, Ashanti, and Dagomba." recorded by Verna Gillis in 1976. Recordings available via Folkways Recordings here: <https://folkways.si.edu/traditional-womens-music-from-ghana-ewe-fanti-ashanti-and-dagomba/world/album/smithsonian>.

a cultural cohort. The conceptual lines between cultural cohort and cultural formation begin to blur with new generations, who often experience the activities and ideas of the cohort in a familial environment, detached from the original context of the cohort's musical activity (Turino 2008, 188).

With the introduction of Hindi film songs into the domestic sphere, foreign film songs were incorporated into the structure of domestic lullabies. In my research, the intergenerational exchange of Hindi film songs as lullabies is evident across three generations, beginning with those born in the late colonial era (1930s and 1940s), followed by those born in the early Independence period (1950s and 1960s), and subsequently those born during the coup period up to the period of democratisation in Ghana (1970s, 1980s and 1990s). Most of the oral histories I conducted in Tamale were with women and men born in the 1950s or 1960s. They were the first generation of children to experience Hindi film songs in the home, often via the gramophone but also if family members sang Hindi film songs to them. Many of those I interviewed were also parents, and as such, they had a unique perspective, being able to both recall their parents' or guardians' opinions of and engagements with Hindi film songs, and also their own experiences singing these songs to their children, nieces, and nephews. While I was unable to interview those born in the 1930s and 1940s, who would have encountered recorded music in the home during their adult years, many interviews with those born in the 1950s and 1960s (such as Rabiyya Abdul's grandmother mentioned above) offer insight into how those growing up in late colonial Ghana felt about film songs used as lullabies in the home. I also spoke with younger generations born in the 1980s and 1990s, who learned Hindi film songs from their parents born in the early post-colonial period, as well as from records and later cassettes.

Oral histories of childhood are difficult, as most adults are unable to recall memories of their early years. As such, interviewees might struggle to recall their mothers singing to them as young children (Pettit 2014, 8). While this was initially a barrier for me in my exploration of music and intergenerational music practices, some people remembered their mothers singing to younger siblings or cousins. For example, Mahdi Alhassan recalled his mother singing to his younger sister during his youth:

Katie: Did your mother ever sing songs to you as a child, to calm you down?

Mahdi: When I was small, I can't tell. But I witnessed my sister below me, when she was crying, my mother would sing Indian songs to console her. Especially songs from *Love in Tokyo*.¹⁸⁶

Mahdi proceeded to sing fragments of the song "Love in Tokyo", the feature song from the 1966 film of the same name. For children growing up in the age of the cinema in Tamale, Hindi film soundtracks such as *Love in Tokyo* (1966) became associated with, and indexical of, childcare and the domestic sphere. For most children, they experienced these songs first from their caregivers, long before listening to them in the cinema hall.

When conducting histories of domestic life in Tamale, it is important to look past notions of "mother" and "father" in the sense of the nuclear family, as many of my informants were raised by extended family relatives including aunts or grandmothers for significant parts of their childhood, and recalled their early musical experiences through their guardians rather than their biological parents. For example, Maira, who was born in 1964, lived with her paternal grandparents as well as her aunts and uncles. As a child, her grandmother had a gramophone, and would play Indian records and sometimes Ashanti records. When I asked Maira which records she enjoyed the most during her childhood, she explained that she liked the *Albela* soundtrack most, recalling that "when I was growing up, my grandmother did not go to the cinema, but she would listen to the gramophone and when she heard Indian songs she would like them. When her songs were not playing, she would ask me 'why, why are they not playing the songs?'"¹⁸⁷ For Maira, her first exposure to Hindi film songs was through her grandmother.

I first met Maira in 2015, and over several years, I spent time with her and her daughters and nieces in her home. Maira explained that after hearing Hindi film songs in the home through her grandmother, she subsequently sang Hindi film songs as lullabies to her daughter and nieces in the home:

Katie: When your children were small, what kind of songs would you sing to them?

Maira: Indian songs. When my babies were small, when they were walking, they would sing Indian songs.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Mahdi Alhassan on 24 December 2017.

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Maira on 14 January 2018.

¹⁸⁸ *ibid.*

I was curious as to whether Maira's children continued to sing these songs into adulthood, especially as Maira is divorced from her husband, and lives in her paternal family home. When I spoke with Maira's daughter, Fiza, who spent the years after her parents divorce in a small room near her father's room, she explained how she did not know Hindi film songs as well as her cousin, because her father feared that Hindi films would distract from her education. Rather than spend time in the market or assisting with chores, Fiza spent her evenings and weekends studying for school. In contrast, Maira's niece, Sadia, who grew up in Maira's room, was exposed to many Hindi film songs sung by Maira throughout her childhood years during daily chores and tasks and while selling cassettes in the market together. As such, Sadia could sing many film songs herself.¹⁸⁹ This example not only sheds light on the expanded notion of family, where Maira raised her niece but not her daughter, but also makes clear the relationship between Hindi film songs and women's labour. It further highlights men's relationship to Hindi film songs: that Fiza's father perceived her as losing concentration in her schooling means that she would have needed to pay full attention to *watching* the Hindi film at a video centre rather than learning to sing fragments of the songs during domestic duties, implying his own experiences of Hindi films as a visually oriented media.

Samira similarly highlighted gendered engagement with Hindi film songs in the home. She explained "I could sing without listening to the songs [on cassette]. Especially when a child is crying. You could just comfort the child while singing the song. It will make them stop their crying." When I asked Samira if her husband would also sing the songs to her children, she explained "No. He would only listen to the songs on cassettes, he would never sing."¹⁹⁰ In both my conversations with Maira and Samira, women's ability to integrate Hindi film songs into domestic music made the practice fluid and constant for children (particularly daughters) who spent more time with mothers, aunts, or grandmothers in the home. These examples hint at why Hindi film songs might have become indexical of women in particular, and not just the home more broadly defined.

As detailed in the beginning of this chapter, the gendered living arrangements of families makes it so that girls spend more time with their mothers, and as a result

¹⁸⁹ Conversation with Maira, Sadia, and Fiza on 23 July 2016.

¹⁹⁰ Interview with Samira on 17 December 2017.

listen to women's domestic song more frequently. In contrast, boys are meant to move out of their mother's room and into another male room in the house early in life.¹⁹¹

Subsequently for boys in Tamale today, any familiarity with women's domestic songs signals a break in the traditional system of gendered enculturation. For example, Alika, who was born in the mid-1950s, explained that:

I sang to all the children, but most especially my daughter. Because she was a girl, I spent so much time with her... After I had my first son, I had my daughter. Because she was a girl, I had so much attention for her! I was always singing to her.¹⁹²

Here, Alika highlights the closeness between mothers and daughters, who spend more time together in the home and subsequently in the market. As well as spending more concentrated time with married women in the home, daughters are also the ones who will perform these domestic songs in future, so that these songs are passed down to young women rather than men.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the divorce or the death of a parent presents an exception to these gender dynamics in the home, so that a boy who was meant to move into a male family member's room stays with his mother much longer than expected. Samira, who was divorced and raised her sons in her room into adolescence, detailed how she used Hindi film songs to calm her two sons during the 1980s.¹⁹³ For Samira's sons, exposure to Hindi film songs in their early years meant that they could also sing Hindi film songs into adulthood. For example, Samira's son Basim, who was born in the early 1980s, noted how men like himself who enjoy Hindi film songs are teased for being a *payaba-leliga* (women cockroach), and that there is a stigma attached to men who can sing Hindi film songs.

During my first time in Tamale in 2013, I was staying with Samira and her family, who I was introduced to by a friend in Accra. One evening in the courtyard, I heard her adult son, Basim, singing the Hindi film song "Jaaneman" (from the 1982 film *Ghazab*) to himself (listen to Audio-Visual Example 2). When I asked Basim where he learned this song, he recalled how his mother used to sing it to him as a child. Later in October 2015, I asked Samira to sing the same song (listen to Audio-Visual Example 3). Below is a diagram comparing the original transliterated lyrics from the

¹⁹¹ As mentioned above, boys move out of their mother's room after early childhood, somewhere between the ages of five and ten (Tamale Kumbungu Survey 1969, 9; Pellow 2011, 137).

¹⁹² Interview with Alika Abubakari on 15 December 2017.

¹⁹³ Interview with Samira Rafik on 17 December 2017.

film song “Jaaneman” with Samira’s lullaby shown on the top right, and her son’s example beneath hers. Rather than transpose the melodies into Western notation, I have colour-coded each specific melodic fragment, so that a repeated colour signals the same melodic content with new lyrics.¹⁹⁴ As well, I have bolded each word in Samira’s version that does not match the original Hindi film lyrics (i.e. phonetic adaptations of the Hindi words or new words altogether), and have used the international phonetic alphabet for consistency in sounding out these non-lexical vocables.¹⁹⁵ When comparing the three versions of the song, it becomes clear that Samira has radically rearranged the original film song, and that her son has drawn some of his rendition from his mother’s adaptation while other portions are likely drawn from the original film song:

¹⁹⁴ Though I considered Western notation as a tool to illustrate these lullabies, I have opted for a colour coated system for two reasons: first, the genre in question is an aural/oral genre, and those who perform this music do not read Western notation. Second, considering the broad and interdisciplinary nature of the thesis, not all readers of this work will be able to read Western notation.

¹⁹⁵ Vocables are sung syllables without meaning, such as “fa la la” or “na na na”.

Original Soundtrack Example

Jaan-e-mann jaane-jigar jaane tamanna jan le Jaan-e-mann jaane-jigar jaane tamanna jan le	
Arey main hoon deewana tera Main hoon deewana tera Surat meri pehchaan le hey	
Jaan-e-mann jaane-jigar jaane tamanna jan le hey hey Jaan-e-mann jaane-jigar jaane tamanna jan le x 2	
<i>Instrumental interlude 1:15 to 1:40</i>	
Ho masihaar dekh haske apne is beemaar ko Hum milenge tod kar duniya ki har deewar ko x2	
E mere roothe sanam kehna tum era maan le	
Jaan-e-mann jaane-jigar jaane tamanna jan le	
<i>Instrumental interlude 2:35 to 3:30</i>	
Yaad kar, yaad kar, yaad kar Yaad kar kaise kehaan dil Reh gaya tha tootkar Yaad kar, yaad kar, Ek din main le gaya tha Tera sab kuchh lutkar Yaad kar, yaad kar	
Mujhse waapas aaj tu, Apne sabhi armaan le	
Jaan-e-mann jaane-jigar jaane tamanna jan le hey hey	

Samira's Example

Hey mæ delike , hey mu næ hey Apne jan armaan le hey hey hey
Hey mæ delike pya na delike apne janle armaan le
Meri hun ki bana nashu ratulema delike mune
Jaan-e-mann jaane kito jaan-e-mann na janle hey hey
Meri hun ki bana nashu ratulema delike mune hey
Jaan-e-mann jaane kito jaan-e-mann na janle hey hey x 2

Basim's Example

Jaan-e-mann jaane ka he ho Jaan-e ka-mann na o jan le ho ho] x 2
Ho mæ delike , Hey mæ delike , Apne hi pyar hey ramole Ho mæ delike , Hey mæ delike , Apne hi pyar hey ramole
Jaan-e-mann jaane ka he ho Jaan-e ka-mann na o jan le ho ho

Figure 33 Diagram (Music Example)

Each coloured box resembles a shared melodic line. Bolded text represents lyrical material not found in the original soundtrack. The bolded material has been phonetically transcribed using the International Phonetic Alphabet.

Between the original film version, Samira's version, and Basim's version of "Jaaneman", there are several noticeable changes. In Samira's and subsequently Basim's versions, vocal style changes drastically, as ornamentation is muted: for example, in the first verse of the original soundtrack version, Amit Kumar sings the introductory line of the song two times, the first without ornamentation, simply as "Jaan-e-mann, Jaan-e-jigar, Jaane tamanna Jan le hey hey", and the second line as a reiteration of the first, extending the last syllables of each word by adding neighbour notes, so that each bolded syllable hovers between two adjacent notes: "Jaan-e-mann, Jaan-e-jigar, Jaane tamann **ah ah** Jan le hey hey". In contrast, each time Samira and Basim sing the chorus, they sing without these bolded neighbouring notes, avoiding any embellishments. Second, the structure also changes drastically: Samira begins partway through the song, skipping over the first two melodic segments (highlighted in orange and purple), instead beginning with the melodic content following the first

instrumental section (highlighted in green). She continues with the subsequent melodic segments that follow the green melodic segment, shown here in purple and orange. While Basim begins with the first melodic segment, his structure is similar to his mother's, though he uses even fewer melodic segments, not singing the purple section as his mother has.

Third, though instrumental interludes had become a common feature of Hindi films by the mid-1970s, Samira and Basim skip these sections altogether in their renditions, replacing the fully supported orchestral instrumentation with *acapella* singing (Morcom 2007, 74). While Samira could have used vocables to imitate string solos featured in the two instrumental segments heard between 1:08 to 1:36 and 2:31 to 3:06 of the original song, she omits these sections entirely, focussing solely on select vocal sections of the song. Fourth, the text changes based on how she hears the song: she sings “*jaane kito*” rather than “*jaane jigar*”, or “*ki bana*” rather than “*deewana*”. Her lyrics deviate from those in the original song, as she improvises and interjects text found throughout the song into different melodic sections. This is actually quite common for lullabies in Ghana (Agawu 1987, 411; Egblewogbe 1975, 64). For example, Agawu notes how in an Ewe lullaby, there is a recurring word (*toboli*) which “has no specific meaning” and is used as part of creative play (*ibid*). Likewise, Finnegan notes how some mothers and guardians in Southern Africa use “meaningless” phrases and words when singing lullabies (Finnegan 2012, 232). This recent post from an Indian childcare blog iterates similar processes of improvising and altering popular film songs for lullabies:

Music not only elevates a caregiver's mood, but has a powerful act on babies. Most importantly, it helps you establish a strong bond between you and baby. And the best part is, you don't have to be a pro or have a great voice to sing. It doesn't even matter if you're singing a tuneless song or lack melody, or mix up the lyrics – the sound of your voice is enough to calm and soothe the baby. My second daughter's favourite tune was a beautiful lullaby called “Laali Laali” from the Telugu hit movie *Swati Muthyam*. Even though I didn't know the lyrics of the entire song, I used to hum and fill in the blanks. Even now, as teenagers, my daughters ask me to sing for them. When I do – after much coaxing and reluctance – they break into peals of laughter. Not to mention, an over-pouring of criticisms that follow – about my voice, melody, tune, pronunciations *et al*! ¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁶ See <https://www.mothersspace.in/blog/baby-has-arrived/beautiful-lullabies-from-indian-movies/>

Similar to the experiences detailed in this post, both Basim and Samira recalled their experiences of “Jaaneman” as a child-directed song rather than a film song. Those experiences are evident in the above musical example. Though Basim’s version draws on less melodic material than Samira’s, the green portion of his rendition is clearly learned from his mother rather than from the original song, given the similar lyrics. Such examples highlight the intergenerational exchange of film songs, incorporated within domestic music practices in Tamale.

In the above blog post, the woman recalls how her teenage daughters now laugh at her for her incorrect pronunciation and melody, presumably because her daughters have now heard the original film song, and are comparing the two versions. In Samira and Basim’s example above, both explained that Basim learned the song “Jaaneman” first from his mother. However, as I got to know Basim over several years, I also learned about his time spent in video centres, and how he had watched the accompanying film *Ghazab* in later years. Furthermore, as so many Hindi film songs are played on women’s cassette players and CD players in the home and in the market, it is very likely that Basim heard the recorded version of “Jaaneman” many times throughout his life. What does this say about the intergenerational exchange of Hindi film songs? What parts of Basim’s version are taken from his mother, and what elements are adapted from subsequent hearings of the original film song?

In his work on Hindi film songs and child-directed music in India, Pettit (2015, 29) similarly notes how his informants in urban India who grew up in the 1990s and 2000s not only experienced Hindi film songs as lullabies from their parents or guardians, but also re-experienced these same songs through radio, television, and stereo systems. He explains that “far from being songs isolated in memories of childhood, these film songs are re-experienced and re-heard” throughout ones’ life (*ibid*). In this context, famous film lullabies “persist in the popular imagination”. Many older Hindi film song lullabies remain popular today because of the accessibility of the recordings, that are encountered by youth from their parents, but also through recorded versions (*ibid*, 101). This phenomenon is referred to by Henry Jenkins (2006) as “convergence culture”, when new and old media connect and overlap in form and function. It also harkens what Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin term “enhancement”, where new technologies do not destroy older forms of communication but rather stand to intensify them (Graham and Marvin 2001, 86; also cited in Larkin 2008, 6).

During a fieldwork trip in 2015, I spoke with many older men and women in various neighbourhoods around Tamale (including Salamba, Sakaka, Sarnargu, Savelugu, and Hausa Zongo) about their experiences and memories singing in the home. At the end of each interview, I gave interviewees the opportunity to sing a Hindi film song of their choice, if they felt comfortable doing so. Interviewees often avoided singing because they were embarrassed about getting the song “wrong”. However, my intent was not to see how accurate or similar their performance was in comparison to the original film track. Rather, each time an informant sang a Hindi film song in Tamale, I was interested in how the songs were purposefully altered to meet the needs of their domestic duties. Considering that these songs were listened to during domestic work, listeners often only heard or remembered parts of songs. Listening to recorded music during chores encourages what Purnima Mankekar (1993, 548) refers to as “half-listening”, or what Kate Lacey (2000, 282-285) calls “fragmented” or “distracted listening”, that happens while domestic labourers are “doing other things”. In order to soothe a crying child, mothers and guardians sang the parts of the songs that they remembered, with less concern for musical structure or pronunciation of Hindi lyrics.¹⁹⁷

For the interviewees who sang songs at the end of interviews, many chose to sing the song “Rote Rote Hasna Seekho” a Hindi film lullaby (*lori*) from *Anhdaa Kanoon* (*Law is Blind*, 1983). In the original film scene, a mother and father sing to their crying daughter to comfort her. The father (played by Amitabh Bachchan) sings the song to his daughter, picking her up and rocking her to calm her down. There are various examples of Hindi film song *loris*, from the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. Many of the early examples of lullabies in Hindi film songs are sung by women to small children, such as “Aaja Ri Aa Nindiya Tu Aa” from *Do Bigha Zamin* (1953), “Chanda Mama Door Ke” from *Vachan* (1955), “Main Gaaun Tu Chup Ho Ja” from *Do Aankhen Barah Haath* (1957), “Soja Re Lalna Jhulao Tohe Palna” from *Par desi* (1957), “Chanda Re Chanda Re” from *Lajwanti* (1958), “Nanhi Kali Sone Chali” from *Sujata* (1959), and “Door Ke O Chanda” from *Ek Dil Sau Afsane* (1963). In the late 1960s, both men and women sang lullabies in Hindi films. Some examples of male characters singing lullabies in Hindi films of this period include “Main Gaoon Tum So Jao” from *Brahmachari* (1968), “Chanda O Chanda” from *Lakhon Mein Ek* (1971),

¹⁹⁷ Emma Brinkhurst (2012, 169) writes that in the Somali context, pounding songs are improvised on the spot during cooking.

“Aa Ri Aaja Nindiya Tu Le Chal Kahi” from *Kunwara Baap* (1974), and “Lalla Lalla Lori Doodh Ki Katori” from *Mukti* (1977). Other songs performed by women include “Ankhiyon Mein Chote Chote Sapne Sajaike” from *Nauker* (1979), “Chanda Hai Tu” from *Aradhana* (1969), and “Bada Natkhat Hai Tu” from *Amar Prem* (1972). It is difficult to say if those who sang “Rote Rote Hasna Seekho” as a lullaby in Tamale did so because it was a child-directed song in the filmic context. While surely those who saw the film in the cinema made this connection, many songs were learned and transmitted aurally through the gramophone, radio, and cassettes, without the context of the film scene. To add to this, many Hindi film songs that were used as lullabies in post-colonial Tamale were not lullabies in the filmic context, such as “Jaaneman” or songs from *Love in Tokyo* (1966).¹⁹⁸

The diagram below details the lyrical song structure for the original recording of “Rote Rote Hasna Seekho” on the far left hand side, followed by three examples of the same song performed by people in Tamale, including performances by Wadood, a man in his late fifties (listen to Audio-Visual Example 4), Fadilah Alhassan, a woman in the early fifties (listen to Audio-Visual Example 5), and Rabiyya Abdul, a woman in her early fifties (listen to Audio-Visual Example 6). As in the previous example, this diagram links each melody line from the original film song with a different coloured box in the Tamale examples. Any lyrical text in the Tamale examples that is not borrowed in some way from the original Hindi lyrics are bolded, and has similarly been documented using the international phonetic alphabet. When Wadood, Fadilah, or Rabiyya use a similar melody line in their own version of “Rote Rote Hasna Seekho” I have coloured that segment of their song to correspond to the original song:

¹⁹⁸ While there are some instances in this thesis where particular Hindi film song melodies are borrowed based on the parallels between the original context of the film song and the new function of the adaptation (such as in the case of a *filmi qawwālī* song being used by a Sufi school teacher in a praise song, or a film *lori* (lullaby) used by women to sing their children to sleep), it is more common for a melody to be used in a range of contexts. On many occasions, I have heard the same film song melody used across a range of functions in Tamale, including for domestic work songs, as religious praise songs, and in film music. Some popular melodies that I have heard in each of these contexts include the melody from “Raat Suhani” from the film *Rani Rupmati* (1957), the melody from “Prem Ka Rog Bada Bura” from the film *Dus Numbri* (1976), and the melody from “Goron Ki Na Kalon Ki” from *Disco Dancer* (1982).

“Rote Rote Hasna Seekho” from *Anhdaa Kanoon* (1983)

<i>Original Soundtrack</i>	<i>Wadood</i>	<i>Fadilah</i>	<i>Rabiyya</i>
Rote rote hasanaa sikho, Hasate hasate ronaa Rote rote hasanaa sikho, Hasate hasate ronaa	Hoste hoste, hasanna sikho Hasate hasate, ronaa Hasate hasate, rote rote Hasanna sikho, bari na	Hoste hoste, hasanna sikho Haske hasike, ronaa	Rote rote hasanaa sikho, Haske hasike, ronaa
Jitanee chaabee bharee raam ne, Utanaa chale khilaunaa Rote rote hasanaa sikho, Hasate hasate ronaa	Digini chagi, bari raam ne Hasanna chale ki ronaa	Jigani chadi bharee raam ne A hostana chale hi ronaa Rote rote, hasanna sikho Haske hasike ronaa	Jigani chagi badi namuni eria bona chale khilaunaa Rote rote hasanaa sikho, Haske hasike lona
<i>Instrumental section 1:03 to 1:26</i>	Rote rote, hasanaa sikho, Hasate hasate ronaa Ayesaa sundar idi barn Apanee chale khil ronaa	Amzo eh tamani saaree saaree Muniyaa hain Yasome ni ke siki apeni chadi Muniyaa hain Amzo te kamani pyaaree pyaaree Muniyaa hain	Hum do hain humaaree, Pyaaree pyaaree muniyaa hain Bas na sikho si si Apane saaree duniyaa hain
Hum do yek humaaree, Pyaaree pyaaree muniyaa hain Bas yahee chhotee see Apanee saaree duniya hain	Rote rote, hasanaa sikho Hasate hasate ronaa		Hum do i humaaree, Pyaaree pyaaree muniyaa hain
Khushiyon se aabaad hain, Apane ghar kaa konaa konaa			Ayesaa tumbol har baaton mein Apanee chale khilaunaa Rote rote hasanaa sikho, Haske hasike ronaa
Rote rote hasanaa sikho, Hasate hasate ronaa Jitanee chaabee bharee raam ne, Utanaa chale khilaunaa			Ro som badi li ko Ma ti si gani budhu za ni si
Rote rote hasanaa sikho, Hasate hasate ronaa			Ro som badi li ko Ma ti si gani budhu za ni si
<i>Instrumental section 2:32 to 2:55</i>			Cha bani chugtu nuu som si Ba di si zani
Badee badee khushiyaan hai, Chhotee chhotee baaton mein			
Nanhe munne taare jaise, Lanbee raaton mein			
Badee badee khushiyaan hai, Chhotee chhotee baaton mein			
Ayesaa sundar hain ye Jeevan jaise koe sapan salonaa			
Rote rote hasanaa sikho, Hasate hasate ronaa Jitanee chaabee bharee raam ne, Utanaa chale khilaunaa Rote rote hasanaa sikho, Hasate hasate ronaa			

Figure 34 Diagram (Music Example)

Each coloured box resembles a shared melodic line. Bolded text represents lyrical material not found in the original soundtrack.

In each of the “Rote Rote Hasna Seekho” examples, singers rearrange the melodic structure and lyrical content of the original song. In terms of musical structure, singers tend to repeat a few memorable melodic segments many times, disregarding the original structure. Some singers even blend multiple Hindi film songs into one performance: for example, in Rabiyya’s version, she introduces a portion of another Hindi film song in the final melodic segment. While some adapted lyrics are clearly

phonetic variations of the original text (such as Fadilah's "oomiya" in place of "duniya"), other versions splice lyrics from various parts of the song together. For example, in the second purple segment of Wadood's example, he combines the lyric "apanee" and "chale", that are from different purple portions of the original film song. As these three examples make clear, aural tradition can be a force for change, as music develops many variants dependent on the individual and their day to day activities (Nettl 2005, 293). The difference between female and male versions is also revealing: while the male performer sings the first two melodic segments of the song several times, women's versions are much more melodically diverse and complex. Women's versions include a greater variety of melodic material in their versions. This discrepancy is likely because women listened to these songs much more frequently in their homes than men, who more often watched films than listened to them.

The Rise of Video Technology

As discussed in Chapter Four, Tamale's media landscape changed dramatically in the 1980s, following the coups and the rise of video technology, that saw the rise of neighbourhood video centres. Women and children who were once unable to attend the cinema could now attend video centres opened in local neighbourhoods throughout Tamale. Similar changes were taking place across the continent: in Lamu, Kenya, video centres transformed one's access to media in the early 1980s, as afternoon and evening video shows drew entire neighbourhoods of women and children to watch Indian films (Fuglesang 1994, 171). Similarly in Northern Nigeria, the introduction of video and VCR as domestic technologies in the 1980s changed women's access to media, who were expected to remain in the home living in female seclusion (*kulle*) (Larkin 2000, 224-227). Larkin suggests that:

Television and video have created what is in effect a privatized female public sphere. It is private in the sense that it gives women in seclusion access to media...it is public because television enabled the coming together of a new common public of female viewers (*ibid*).

In Egypt as well, the demise of state-owned cinemas saw a rise of women watching films at home, with older Indian films such as *Mother India* becoming a popular choice for video rental (Iordanova 2006, 134). In each example, video technologies afforded new access to media for married women and their children. As most video centres were within walking distance of one's house, and owned by neighbourhood friends or family, women could attend with less hassle from husbands. However, as Nafisa makes

clear, the proximity of video centres did not necessarily make them any more convenient for those with particularly heavy workloads. Recalling the rise of videos in her neighbourhood, Nafisa explained that “because I was always busy, when they put [the VHS] in and would sit to watch it, I would sit for a little bit and then keep working”.¹⁹⁹

The gendered relationship between viewing and listening to films is evidenced in my time spent at video centres in Tamale in 2016. July and August marks the school break in Tamale, and as such I attended video centres in the city each day, as I was told that youth go there to watch films. In actuality, girls were rarely there to watch videos, as they went to help their mothers with chores or with selling in the market. In contrast, boys attended the video centre almost religiously, watching mostly Dagbani films alongside a range of action movies from the US and China.²⁰⁰ While Hindi films used to be shown most often in video centres, they are shown only occasionally these days, as video centre owners fear that boys will not patronise these films, given their associations with women.²⁰¹ Men and boy’s ability to spend large parts of their day on leisure is correlated to decreased agricultural production in the region and the resulting “crisis of masculinity” that has left many men unemployed or underemployed, while women continue to work selling goods in the market (Haas 2016, vii).



Figure 35 Boys watching an action film at a video centre in Tamale in 2016

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Nafisa in Tamale on 4 November, 2016.

²⁰⁰ Conversation with Video Center owner on 1 September 2016.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*



Figure 36 Watching Hindi Films at Home

Young boys watch a film in their home in Sarnargu Zongo. November 2015.

At the market, women continue to listen to (rather than watch) Hindi film songs on their phones, while they focus on selling goods. For example, listen to Audio-Visual Example 7: A market stall selling Shea Butter in Tamale in November 2015. This track is of women sitting in a market stall selling shea butter while listening to Hindi film songs on their mobile phone.²⁰² Also in the market, a well-known DVD shop plays the Hindi film music video compilation DVD at strategic times during the day, such as when girls are going home from the market, to attract sales as they pass by. The gendered practices of listening to or viewing films reveals a great deal about how the gendered nature of space and labour practices relate to leisure in Tamale. These patterns also make clear how Hindi film songs sustain their indexical relationship to women; as women continue to listen to these songs in their daily chores and during time spent at the market, a link is reaffirmed between Hindi film songs as women's songs in the domestic sphere.

²⁰² In fact, whenever I would leave town to buy shea butter, the women making shea butter would also be listening to Hindi film songs on their phone.

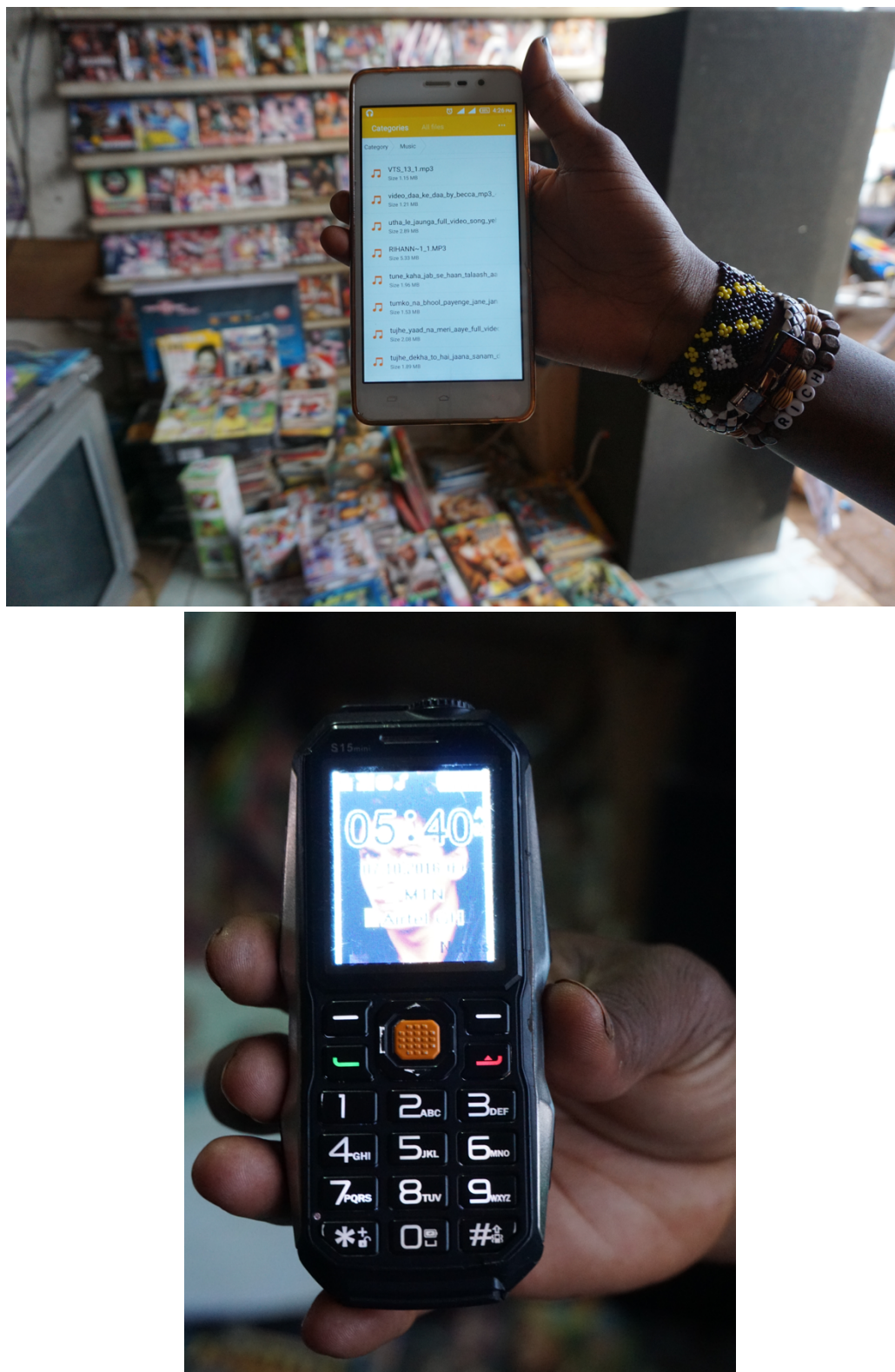


Figure 37 Old and New Mobile Phones

Caption: Images of old and new mobile phones playing both old and new Hindi film songs in Tamale central market on 21 October 2016. The screen background in the second photograph is a picture of Shah Rukh Khan.

Conclusion

Family structure and gendered relationships impact children's experiences of music in the domestic sphere: while domestic music has been passed down through generations long before the arrival of Hindi film songs in the region, these foreign sources work to illuminate otherwise implicit musical processes. Though film songs were first introduced in the home through mediated technologies, such as on gramophone records, they were later incorporated by women. During domestic labour, women lifted these popular songs out of their inscribed form and vocalised them on their own terms, rearranging and remixing these songs to fit the form and structure of lullabies and work songs.

The embodied performance of Hindi films in the home further reifies indices of "women" and "Hindi film songs" for youth. While in the 1960s and 1970s, Hindi film songs were a marker of urban youth culture, today youth hear Hindi film songs as "our mother's song", clear evidence of the transition from Hindi film songs as part of a cultural cohort to a part of one's cultural formation, and their change from inscribed song to incorporated musical practice. Youth perceptions of Hindi film songs reflects the spaces in which Hindi film songs are most commonly heard. In contemporary Tamale, one is likely to hear Hindi film songs from Bollywood DVD compilations while women do chores around the house, or in the market. At the same time, it is much less common to watch Hindi films, considering the closure of the cinema halls and their absence in the video centres. That Hindi film songs are incorporated into women's domestic music in the early stages of childhood makes clear why Hindi film songs are so commonly referred to as "our mother's songs", reflecting the intrinsic ties forged between these songs and domestic music in children's early years of life. As will be evidenced in the following chapter, Hindi film songs were adapted and incorporated into a range of intimate musical activities, of which domestic song is only one thread.

Chapter Six: Hindi Film Songs in Tamale's Islamic School *Mawlid*

Introduction

In the early 1960s, Tijaniyya (Sufi) Islamic school teachers combined Arabic praise texts with Hindi film song melodies for the *mawlid al-nabi*, an annual event in celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birth.²⁰³ Beginning in the 1960s and up until present day, Hindi film song melodies and choreographies have been used for school *mawlid* performances throughout the city.²⁰⁴ In this chapter, I explore the incorporation of Hindi film song melodies into the *mawlid* performance, and further detail the reasons why teachers integrated film song melodies and choreographies into this religious and educational event.²⁰⁵ The study of Hindi film songs in the *mawlid* adds a further dimension to the study of music in social life in post-colonial Tamale. It reveals new insights into the ways that Tamale's Sufi religious community engaged with and experienced popular music during the post-colonial period. It makes clear the resonance of Islamicate culture found in early Hindi films and their songs amongst Ghana's Muslim communities. Finally, it adds to the existing scholarship on intra-religious tensions in the region, through the lens of education and the performing arts.

In the first portion of this chapter, I provide a brief exploration of the *mawlid* in various regional contexts. I then move on to detail the history of the Tijaniyya community in Tamale, as well as the history of Islamic learning in Ghana. Throughout this portion, I chart the rise of a new Muslim community in Tamale in the 1960s, known as Ahlus-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah, who had far more conservative values regarding music and dance within Islam. The emerging influence of this new community is important to the study of *mawlid* in Tamale, as Ahlus-Sunnah leaders openly denounced the *mawlid*, deeming it unIslamic for its use of music and dance. This put the *mawlid* at the centre of intra-religious debates beginning in the post-colonial period, an aspect that I suggest plays into the popularising of the practice. I then turn to discuss the role of Hindi film songs in garnering participation in early postcolonial Tijaniyya schools.²⁰⁶ I show how religious scholars relied on the

²⁰³ The *mawlid* is practiced by Tamale's Tijaniyya community, a Sufi order of Islam.

²⁰⁴ Throughout this chapter unless otherwise noted, my discussion of the *mawlid* is referencing the *mawlid* taking place in the Islamic schools.

²⁰⁵ The *mawlid al-Nabi* is a non-liturgical festival event that takes place each year in the third month of the Islamic calendar. In Ghana, it is celebrated by the Tijaniyya, a Sufi order of Islam. The *mawlid* has a variety of spellings, including *mevlit*, *mevlut*, *maulūd*, *mālīd*, *milād*, *mōlid*, and *mulid* (Faruqi 1986, 79).

²⁰⁶ School teachers are mainly in charge of composing *mawlid* songs, though they may borrow songs suggested from parents of students or songs from other schools.

indexicality of familiar songs and dance moves to encourage youth participation in a period of intra-religious debate that specifically targeted the *mawlid* practice. As such, Hindi film song melodies and dance choreographies became increasingly common in *mawlid* practices and performances throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

As well as being popular with youth at the time, Hindi film songs were also the first widespread music from a non-African and non-Western region to circulate on a massive scale in Tamale. In the early post-colonial period, there was little access to film or music records from majority Muslim regions outside of Africa, especially following the colonial banning of Arabic language media throughout French West Africa beginning in the 1940s (Genova 2013, 67). Unlike American Jazz, Funk, and Soul records circulating in the region at that time, Hindi film songs featured melismatic melodies, Arabic loan words, and scalar patterns that sounded similar to religious scholars' own everyday Islamic soundscapes.²⁰⁷ The subsequent portion of this chapter thus focusses on how the Islamicate iconography embedded in early Hindi films further signalled a link to a broader Islamic world for Tamale's Tijani school teachers. The incorporation of Hindi film song melodies in the *mawlid* drew the practice closer to the broader Islamic world, beyond the African continent. For Islamic school teachers in Tamale's Sufi schools, Hindi film songs served the dual purpose of encouraging youth to participate in the *mawlid*, while also affording Tijani scholars a sense of religious legitimacy.

In the final portion of this chapter, I explore the changing place of Hindi film song melodies in contemporary *mawlid* practices. While initially Hindi film songs were incorporated into the *mawlid* practice to gain new Islamic school students, these melodies are often no longer recognisable to contemporary youth, except for those melodies that students know from Dagbani films or from their mothers and guardians in the home. Many of the *mawlid* songs of the post-colonial period have been passed down in schools across generations, becoming embedded within the *mawlid* culture, to the extent that youth hear these melodies as being part of the *mawlid* tradition. At the same time, when young Tijani school teachers compose new songs for the practice, they often draw on recent Dagbani film songs that are now popular amongst youth. As many Dagbani film songs are based on Hindi film song melodies, these teachers are unknowingly continuing to use Hindi film song melodies in their school performances.

²⁰⁷ The Islamicate nature of Hindi films was further emphasised in the cinema halls, where early Hindi films featured Muslim characters, who dressed modestly and attended daily prayers at the mosque (Kesavan 1994, 244-257)

Similar to the intergenerational experiences of Hindi film songs in the home discussed in the previous chapter, the film melodies used in the *mawlid* are undergoing “semantic snowballing” through generations, collecting new associational meanings along the way (Turino 2008, 146).

While this chapter focuses on Hindi film songs and dances in the *mawlid*, these songs and choreographies were only one of the ways that Tijani teachers worked to keep the *mawlid* interesting to youth during the post-colonial period. Scholars introduced (and continue to introduce) many elements of urban youth culture into the school *mawlid* event, ranging from traditional dances such as *takai* or the Ewe *agbadza* dance, to Islamic prayer poses, to popular dance moves from Ghana and elsewhere. Scholars commissioned new metal drums for the *mawlid*, that had been an *acapella* performance practice up until that time. While all of these changes are important in the study of the Islamic school *mawlid*’s development in Tamale, they are beyond the scope of this chapter.

The Mawlid in Context

In Ghana, the *mawlid al-nabi* is an all-night annual festival of dancing and singing in honour of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, celebrated by the Tijaniyya community, a Sufi order of Islam that originated in North Africa in the eighteenth century.²⁰⁸ To my knowledge, there are four different types of *mawlid al-nabi* events in the region: (1) *kwashi-rawa*: late-night celebrations patronised by the adult Tijani community, comprising dancing, drumming, and religious sermons, (2) celebrations in the mosque on the day of the Prophet’s birth, (3) Damba festival, that is partly in honour of the Prophet’s birth but also in honour of paramount chiefs, and (4) celebrations run by Islamic schools, which is the focus of this chapter.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ In Tamale, the Islamic school *mawlid* takes place not only on the day of the Prophet’s birth, but in the months that follow, as schools take turns with their events on weekends so that audiences can attend each performance. Thus, *mawlid* celebrations tend to spill out from the actual “day”, and instead take place each weekend for over two months afterwards.

²⁰⁹ During Damba, the *luna* (talking drum) player accompanies those reciting the Qur’an, while the *lunsi* (a group of drummers) escort Muslim clerics to the chief’s compound where the Prophet’s birth is formally announced. Following the naming ceremony, the emphasis in the event shifts, and Damba becomes “devoted to the land, chieftaincy, social networks, and Dagbamba values” (Charry 2000b, 553; Locke and Lunna 1990; Samwini 2006, 114).



Figure 38 Dancing at a *kwashi-rawa* event held in central Tamale in January, 2018.

While in West Africa, the *mawlid* is largely celebrated by Tijaniyya communities, the *mawlid* is practised by Sufi Muslim communities throughout the world.²¹⁰ As a non-liturgical festival context, it can take many shapes and forms, blending religious praise with elements of entertainment, such as musical performance, food vendors, and carnival-style games (Dunleavy 2006, 93-110; Morandini 2010, 8; Ramzy 2014, xxiv; Madoeuf 2005, 77; Armbrust 2008, 217). Throughout Africa, the *mawlid* is an important occasion for singing, drumming, and dancing (Charry 2000b, 553): in Senegal, the *mawlid*, known locally as *gámmu*, is a nocturnal ceremony where praise poems are sung for the Prophet (McLaughlin 1997, 566; Frishkopf 2008, 492). In Liberia, the *mahodi* involves a twelve-hour event where community members read praise poetry, moving attendees to “dance, rejoice, and weep” (Monts 2000, 70). In Kenya, the *mawlid* is celebrated in a week-long festival, and a frame drum, flute, and small drum are used in religious celebrations in mosques throughout the city (Charry 2000b, 553). In Zanzibar, the *maulidi* takes place in open spaces throughout the island during the month of the Prophet’s birth, and religious readings are interspersed with student performances of sung poems in Arabic and Swahili (Topp Fargion 2002, 2007). In Mayotte, the *mulidi* brings “body and word” together in a “striking performance of music and dance”, comprising a sacred component (the recitation of the *maulida* of al-Barzanji) followed by drumming and dancing (Lambek 1993, 152-153).

²¹⁰ Other communities, such as Coptic Christians in Egypt hold similar festivals to honour and commemorate orthodox saints (Ramzy 2014, xxiv).

Variations of the Islamic school *mawlid* take place throughout the continent as well. In Mayotte, *mulidi* dances are taught alongside other Islamic school lessons during childhood (*ibid*, 153). In Zanzibar, *madrasa* (Islamic school) students are hired to perform their *maulidi* repertoire at weddings, singing poems accompanied on eight round frame drums of different sizes and pitches (Topp Fargion 2002, 207). In Zanzibari *madrasas*, the *maulidis* and their *kasidas* (unaccompanied sung poems) are sung in a medley-like fashion with intricate choreography throughout (Kirkegaard 2012, 38-40). Though not directly linked to the *mawlid*, there are all-girl choirs in Northern Nigerian Islamiyya schools who sing Arabic language praise songs set to Hindi film song melodies (Adamu 2007b, 14-21).²¹¹

During the months leading up to the *mawlid* in Tamale, Tijani teachers compose and teach *mawlid* repertoire for large groups of youth, ranging from age three to sixteen. Depending on the school, youth begin to attend evening practices one to two months before the event takes place, and each practice lasts three hours or more, often ending late into the night. Separated by age sets, youth are first taught praise songs in a call and response format between religious leader and youth. Once the students learn the songs, older students assist in teaching the accompanying dances, while the teacher and older boys accompany students on metal drums.²¹² Each group learns six or seven praise songs, as well as portions of the *hadith* in Arabic. At the end of the month, they perform in their various groups in front of their community, in what is an all-night affair. Though most do not understand Arabic, they gain exposure to the sounds of the language during the event. During the *hadith*, many children cry profusely, demonstrating their religious passion and devotion to Allah. Islamic school *mawlid* also includes plays, known as *wassan mankaranta*, where children act out the life history of the Prophet (Iddrisu 2013, 133). As Faruqi suggests, such events are intended to “impart knowledge of the Prophet’s biography and stimulate Arabic literary...skills”

²¹¹ Islamiyya schools are newer “modern” Islamic schools in Nigeria and Ghana, that began to grow in popularity in the 1970s, whose teaching technologies “resemble the secular education introduced under British colonial rule” (Hoechner 2018, 3). This chapter explores the *mawlid* practice in schools that receive funding from the Ghanaian government schools as well as self-funded schools that are more oriented towards the “classical” style of teaching. For more information on the changing nature of Islamic schools in Ghana, see Owusu-Ansah and Idrissu 2008.

²¹² Though I never saw a female drummer during practices or events, teachers often encouraged girls to participate in drumming, and personally lamented to me how it was difficult to encourage such participation when girls are discouraged from drumming in traditional Dagbamba music. I often saw girls dabbling and experimenting with playing the metal drums before or after practice without any interference, further evidencing the acceptability of their drumming in this context.

(1986, 80). In Tamale, both the practices and performance form part of Tijani youth's religious education, as they learn to sing praises and to recite the *hadith* in Arabic.

Islamic School Learning in Northern Ghana: A Brief History

The Tijaniyya religious order spread throughout West Africa during the nineteenth century. It arrived in Northern Ghana in the late 1800s via Mande, Wangara, Juula, and Hausa traders (Frishkopf 2016, 330; Samwini 2006, 22). Initially the faith was restricted to a small portion of pious Muslim men, as only specialists could access its mystical education (*tarbiya*) through a secluded practice of intensive study and fasting (Samwini 2006, 24; Dumbe 2011, 36).²¹³ The faith began to expand in the 1930s, when Senegalese religious scholar Ibrahim Niasse founded a new branch of Tijaniyya known as Jama'at Fayda Tijaniyya (The Tijaniyya Community of Grace). Niasse strove to make spiritual education (*tarbiya*) accessible to everyone, regardless of age, gender, or level of education (MacGaffey 2006a, 120; Ihle 2008, 272; Locke and Lunna 1990, 11). He promoted his new branch of spiritual education across the subcontinent, which grew exponentially in subsequent decades. Followers of Tijaniyya adapted the faith to suit local circumstances, especially with regards to festivals and life-cycle contexts, such as births, marriages, and funerals (Frishkopf 2008, 484). In Tamale, Tijani followers integrated extra-Islamic cultural practices into the faith, including elaborate funeral rites, and local music and dance practices, such as those found in various *mawlid* celebrations held throughout the city (Kobo 2012, 163-164; Samwini 2006, 38). The absorption of extra-Islamic practices helped to define a "localised Islam" that ensured the longevity of Tijaniyya in the region (Frishkopf 2008, 484).

Prior to the 1960s, the *mawlid* was a part of Tijani Islamic school learning, though the events were acapella group performances, sometimes accompanied by clapping.²¹⁴ The popularising of the *mawlid* in Tamale's Tijani schools in the 1960s – including the use of Hindi film song melodies, popular choreographies, and metal drums – is intimately connected to a longer history of Islamic education in colonial and postcolonial Northern Ghana. Throughout the colonial period, Islamic education received little governmental support, as British administration focused their energies on English language schools, usually run by Christian missions (Falola and Salm 2002, 54; Newell 2002, 83). During the late colonial period, administration implemented major

²¹³ See also Ibrahim 2011; Kobo 2012, 163; Falola and Salm 2002, 52.

²¹⁴ Interview with religious scholar A on 17 October, 2016; Interview with former Islamic school student (who attended in the 1940s) on 13 November 2016.

development plans to ensure student enrolment in governmental school programmes. In 1951, the colonial government issued the “Accelerated Development Plan for Education”, opening government schools throughout the country (Iddrisu 2002, 336; Godwyll 2008, 113-114). Similar trends continued into the post-colonial period, as the CPP focused on developing compulsory English language governmental schools throughout Ghana, with little support for Islamic education (Addae-Mensah *et al.* 1973, 5; Weiss 2007, 101-103; Malki 2010, 259).²¹⁵ These “secular” educational systems were not neutral (Stephens 2000, 32). They represented Western, and often Christian pedagogies, and promoted English literacy.²¹⁶ They differed greatly from Islamic school education, largely based around the audition and recitation of the Qur’an.



Figure 39 Image of mosque in Tamale, sometime between 1924 and 1930. Accessed from the Basel Mission Image Archive.

That the CPP skirted around the development of Islamic education in Ghana is significant, as it left room for foreign governments and institutions to influence Ghana’s Islamic education system. During the 1960s and 1970s, majority Muslim states, including Egypt and Saudi Arabia, viewed Ghana’s Independence as a chance to spread their political and religious influence in a new state. Representatives were sent to Ghana offering new teaching methodologies, tools, and syllabi for Islamic school

²¹⁵ Similar trends were happening in other postcolonial states, such as in Mali, where post-Independence regimes favoured state and Catholic educational institutions over Islamic schools (Bleck 2015, 81).

²¹⁶ Ghanaian Muslims were often wary of sending their children to governmental schools for fear their children would convert to Christianity (Dumbe 2011, 70; Iddrisu 2002, 340; Williamson 2014, 129). Such fears were not unwarranted, as Muslim youth who attended mission schools often converted to Christianity in the process (Ali 2012, 64).

teachers in the region, as well as infrastructural support, building schools and mosques (Bleck 2015, 81; Dumbe 2011, 15-18; Falola and Salm 2002, 54-55; Ibrahim 2011, 117-118; Malki 2010, 259). During these years, Saudi Arabia offered further scholarships for students from Accra, Kumasi, and Tamale to study abroad at major religious institutions (Dumbe 2011, 54-55; Iddrisu 2002, 340; Falola and Salm 2002, 53-54). For example, after visiting the Anbaryyya Islamic school in Tamale in 1971, the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to Ghana worked alongside his home government to implement a scholarship for graduates of Anbaryyya school to study in Saudi Arabia (Iddrisu 2002, 340). The arrival of Ghana Airways in 1958 further extended Muslim Ghanaians' reach to the Middle East and South Asia, as flights operated between Accra and Beirut, Cairo, and Khartoum, with connections to Karachi, Bombay, and even Mecca, making it possible for graduates to travel abroad for study elsewhere, and also making the Islamic pilgrimage possible for more scholars and religious leaders.



Figure 40 Advertisement from the Ashanti Pioneer, January 1962

Foreign religious development programmes were popular with Ghanaian Muslims, whose educational needs had largely been neglected by the colonial state. Many students who benefited from these development programmes were subsequently influenced by a reformist-revivalist form of Salafi Islam (Ahlus-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah) (Frishkopf 2016, 331; Kobo 2012, 125). Throughout the 1960s, Tamale's emerging Ahlus-Sunnah community began to distance themselves from the Tijaniyya community; they publicly denounced Tijani practices that they deemed to be unIslamic, such as the use of amulets and saint veneration, and elaborate funeral rituals (Aning and Abdallah 2013, 154-159; Ihle 2008, 272; Samwini 2006, 113).²¹⁷ In 1964, Ahlus-Sunnah religious leader Afa Ajura publicly condemned the *mawlid* at a *mawlid* festival in Accra for similar reasons, a controversial speech that instigated ongoing debates around the acceptability of the *mawlid* within Ghana's Muslim community (Kobo 2012, 168). As one elderly Ahlus-Sunnah man in Tamale explained to me in an interview in 2016:

From the 1960s, [Afa Ajura] was against the Tijani, some of the things they did wrong. He said no – this is wrong, there is no dancing, and you cannot have kids six years, ten years, sitting outside at midnight under the guise of having *mawlid*. It led to so many things: children who couldn't go out left home, and you would say "oh my child has gone to *mawlid*" and stayed throughout the night. The grown up girls, are you able to check them? Where are they? And so on. So this mallam said, no, that cannot happen, you can't have children go out late into the night and celebrating the Prophet. So, the Sunni's don't. It is the Tijani side.²¹⁸

Emerging debates around the Islamic school *mawlid* in Tamale highlight larger concerns over how "moralities ought to be embodied", reflecting anxieties not only around the music and dance itself, but also about the politics of women's bodies and their place within the home, as outlined in Chapter Five (Neveu-Kringelbach 2013, 7). Like other participatory musical and dance practices, the *mawlid* encourages youth to "orient mind and body towards unknown others", participating in events that both acknowledge and extend religious and social imaginaries (Dueck 2013, 93). As Michael Frishkopf (2016, 343) writes of intra-religious tensions in Tamale, the *mawlid* remains a "critical social technology underlying the expansion and solidarity of [the Ahlus-Sunnah's] principal competitor in the religious marketplace". This is especially

²¹⁷ Niasse's image is printed on necklaces, charms, bumper stickers and t-shirts all around Tamale.

²¹⁸ Interview with former Islamic school student who studied in Tamale during the 1940s on 13 November 2016.

true for the Islamic school *mawlid*, that engages youth from the community with the goal of enrolling them in Tijani schools.

The use of music in the *mawlid* stood in stark contrast to an emerging Ahlus-Sunnah reading of Islam, centred on strict readings of the Qur'an, with an increasing ambivalence towards the use of music, that scholars considered *haram* (forbidden). In his writing on Peircean semiotics, Turino notes that because propositions and linguistic arguments are mediated, word-based evaluations, “they do not provide the feeling or direct experience *of* belonging; rather, they are claims and arguments *about* belonging” (1999, 241). The Ahlus-Sunnah approach, firmly based in the symbolic nature of language and text, differs greatly from Tijani practices, which rely on music and dance for their “special potential in engaging large groups of people collectively”, creating “the experience of social synchrony” (*ibid*, 241). In the following section, I explore how Hindi film song melodies and choreographies were employed for their indexical qualities, to draw new youth into the Tijani fold during a time of intense intra-religious debate, creating a sense and feeling of belonging.

Hindi Film Songs and Dances as Indices in Tamale’s Islamic School Mawlid

Song

As mentioned above, praise songs for the *mawlid* were once acapella. However, by the 1960s, Tijaniyya Islamic school leaders worked to “make things interesting” in the Islamic school *mawlid* by introducing various forms of urban youth culture into the practice, including fashionable dances, metal drums associated with Simpa dancing, and Hindi film song melodies.²¹⁹ In what follows, I outline the process for writing songs for the *mawlid*, and show how scholars incorporated popular melodies into their praise songs. I then explore scholars’ reasons for using popular melodies in the *mawlid*.

During my fieldwork in 2016, various Islamic school teachers explained how they write their *mawlid* praise songs. In Tamale, most Islamic school teachers base their lyrical texts from books that circulate in the region called *littafin* (the word for “book” in Hausa, a Northern Nigerian language commonly used by Muslims in Ghana).

²¹⁹ To get a sense of what Simpa looked like at that time, find John Miller Chernoff’s photo gallery of a Simpa event available here: < [http://www.adrummerstestament.com/images/Images_\(3-14\)_Simpa.html](http://www.adrummerstestament.com/images/Images_(3-14)_Simpa.html) >

These are religious books, written in Arabic, and feature a variety of *nasheed* (Islamic chants or acapella vocal music). For example, some scholars use text from *Tala'al Badru 'Alayna* for their *mawlid* praise, an Islamic poem that residents of Madina sang for the Prophet Muhammad upon his arrival after the Battle of Tabuk. Others draw on books written by Sheikh Ibrahim Niasse, a popular Senegalese religious leader who wrote books about the birth and life history of the Prophet.

When Islamic school teachers began to use Hindi film song melodies as the base for their *mawlid* praise songs, they had to select texts from their *littafin* that fit the prosodic structure of the film song melody.²²⁰ To do so, they would listen to a film song on record or cassette repeatedly while attempting to fit different praises onto that particular film melody, sometimes having to alter the pre-existing *nasheed*, or write their own praise texts.²²¹ As one teacher explained: “when you listen to the Indian music and you want to turn it [to Arabic], the lyrics, you only sit and create the lyrics and put it into writing, and when you do that, you sit until it gets perfect”.²²² For many, it is the process of listening to a Hindi film song “over and over again”, and “finding Arabic texts that fit well”.²²³ As one teacher explained: “I look at the nature of the song, how the melody goes, and then I will be able to get a better rhythm [referring to the poetic metre] for it”.²²⁴ The Arabic text is determined to some extent by the rhythmic and melodic nature of the Hindi film song, as the teacher tries to match poetic praise material to the film song’s lyrical rhythm.

Islamic school teachers draw upon a range of Hindi film song melodies when writing praise songs. Though I explore particular examples in more depth below, borrowed film melodies I encountered during my time at practices were drawn from a range of films, including from *Chori Chori* (1956), *Mother India* (1957), *Rani Rupmati* (1957), *Hare Rama Hare Krishna* (1971), *Yadon Ki Barat* (1973), *Dus Numbri* (1976), and *Qurbani* (1980). Initially, scholars incorporated these film melodies into the *mawlid* to maintain youth attendance and participation in the face of rising intra-religious tension, as these dances and songs indexed other popular youth movements of the time.²²⁵ Hindi film song melodies caught the attention of youth passing by evening

²²⁰ Eisenberg similarly writes that within Indian *taarab*, Swahili poets work diligently to combine their poetry with a Hindi film song (2017, 343).

²²¹ Interview with religious scholar E on 16 October, 2016.

²²² Interview with religious scholar A on 17 October, 2016.

²²³ Interview with religious scholar E on 16 October, 2016.

²²⁴ Interview with religious scholar B on 15 November 2016.

²²⁵ Interview with religious scholar A on 17 October, 2016.

practices at the Islamic schools, who could collectively “know” a song, despite not knowing each other (*ibid*, 236; Turino 2008, 7-8). In other words, through their concatenation over time in the cinema hall and in the home, Hindi film songs became a powerful tool for addressing a larger youth public (Warner 2002, 90).²²⁶ As well as being popular amongst youth, these well-known songs and dance movements were familiar to newcomers, making it easy for them to join in at Islamic school *mawlid* practices. This is similar to Byron Dueck’s exploration of “ending formulas” in Black British jazz jam sessions. For Dueck, ending formulas are those musical moments so widely known amongst jazz musicians that they can employ them during first-time musical encounters. They trust that other musicians will quickly and appropriately join in or respond (2013, 92-103). Like jazz endings, the integration of Hindi film melodies and popular choreographies in Tamale’s Islamic school *mawlid* rehearsals presuppose a shared (indexical) knowledge between strangers in the room, that will collectivise their activities and behaviours in a quick and simple way.

There is a growing body of work that details the use of popular music in Sufi devotional contexts. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Manuel notes that in North India, *qawwālī* singers set devotional texts to popular tunes, including familiar Hindi film song melodies (Manuel 1993, 124-136). As well, Larkin (2004a, 91-92) and Adamu (2012, 42; 2007b) detail the role of Hindi film songs in several forms of Sufi praise music in Kano, Northern Nigeria, including *bandiri* music and the music of Islamiyya school choirs there. Fiona McLaughlin has written about a “new tradition” of praise songs for Senegalese marabouts (highly regarded religious leaders), in which Senegalese musicians draw on a variety of musical styles, from the Afro-Cuban melodies of Orchestra Baobab to the *mbalax* rhythms of Youssou N’dour (1997, 566-567). McLaughlin also mentions how secular songs from pop stars are sung in Sufi ceremonies, such as those held by Qadiriyya communities in the region (*ibid*). Hélène Neveu-Kringelbach details the blending of popular music with religious practice amongst Sufi adherents in Senegal, noting that most contemporary Senegalese pop cassettes and CDs include praise for well-known religious leaders (2013, 111). Also in Senegal, Joseph Hill writes about the genre *yěngu*, a performance genre that “combines Sufi chant with frenetic drumming and dancing” (2016; 2017, 1-2). In Dakar, *yěngu* is being used to recruit youth into *Fayda*, a Tijaniyya Sufi movement there (*ibid*).²²⁷ Hill

²²⁶ Georgina Born similarly writes of music’s capacity to aggregate disparate community members into collectives, as listeners forge “novel social alliances” (Born 2011, 381).

²²⁷ Hill notes how some senior religious leaders condemn or pass over *yěngu*, with some even terming it un-Islamic (2017, 1-2).

further details the popularity of hip hop amongst *Fayda* adherents, that has been used to draw new adherents to the *Fayda* faith as well (2017, 1-2).²²⁸

That Tijani school teachers employed film song melodies to encourage participation is not dissimilar to the practices of charismatic churches in Southern Ghana that emerged around the same time. As one Ahlus-Sunnah informant in Tamale explained to me during my fieldwork:

all over Ghana, not only with Muslims...music and dancing crept into the churches. If you go to the church here, you would see the guitar, the organ, the drum, and so on. Those are the kinds of things that move people to the churches. And people wanted it to go into our religion. But Islam has its strict rules. Then they limited it to the *mawliidi*. That is why the Sunnis don't allow [the *mawliid*] at all, because of the singing and the dancing.²²⁹

This former Islamic school student and Ahlus-Sunnah convert highlights the role of popular music as a technology for participation; he describes the music as literally moving bodies into church services and into the *mawliid* practices. In many ways, the introduction of popular songs and dances as well as the addition of metal drums in the Islamic school *mawliid* in Tamale is similar to the major shifts that took place in Southern Ghanaian churches around the same time.²³⁰ Leaders of new charismatic churches in the 1970s, such as Assemblies of God, Church of Christ, and the Church of Pentecost, reversed earlier restrictions on music and dance set in place by orthodox mission churches (Agordoh 2004, 5-6). They introduced new forms of musical worship, taking songs gleaned from African American gospel cassettes, and performing them in worship services, with large bands including electric guitar and bass players, electronic keyboardists, and jazz drummers (*ibid* 5; Gifford 2004, 27).²³¹ Various case studies have spoken to the role of popular music in Ghana's Charismatic churches,

²²⁸ Somewhat in the inverse, Annemette Kirkegaard's research on Zanzibari *maulidi* groups shows how music of *maulidi* groups has been adopted into popular music festivals. For example, at the Sauti za Busara festival in Zanzibar in 2011, she writes that the Maulidi ya Humu ya Mtendeni Ensemble performed between a Mali blues group and a popular Cameroonian dance music performance, becoming its own commercialised popular music genre on the island, an example of what ethnomusicologist Bob White terms "commercial religious music" (2012, 38-42; White 2003, 36).

²²⁹ Interview with former Islamic school student who attended during the 1940s on 13 November, 2016.

²³⁰ Tom Wagner's writing of Hillsong Christian congregational music in London similarly discusses musical performance as a key aspect to the visceral experience of worship in an evangelical context, which works to both brand and promote the church (Wagner 2013, 116).

²³¹ This worship style became so popular that orthodox churches, such as the Catholic, Presbyterian, and Anglican churches adopted it as well, so that most churches in Southern Ghana now feature popular forms of music and dance (Agordoh 2004, 7; Falola and Salm 2002, 50; Quan-Baffour 2018).

where it is used to establish and extend their religious communities (Agordoh 2004, 5-6; Carl 2015, 47-55; see also Meyer 2015).²³²

A great deal has been written about the use of popular music as a technology for community building in other Christian contexts in Africa as well. Just north of Ghana in Burkina Faso, the Burkinabé Mennonite Church is similarly setting religious texts to Euro-American popular songs in order to “create a community out of a diverse group” (Friesen 2017, 59-62). Similar processes occurred with foreign missionaries in Africa during the nineteenth century. For example, when Methodist missionaries began to spread religious texts in Ghana in the mid-1800s, they set unfamiliar English religious hymns to popular traditional Fante *adenkum* melodies in order to interest new attendees while also familiarising congregants with these foreign texts (Turkson 1995, 161). In Uganda there were similar patterns taking place: the Catholic church set the praise hymn “Te Deum Laudamus” to popular folk melodies from Kampala to encourage participation (*ibid*, 165-166).²³³

Dance

Throughout the world, metered *mawlid* performances include choreographed movements, including swaying of the torso and waving of the arms (Faruqi 1986, 87). Tamale’s Islamic school *mawlid* dances are a form of line dance choreography, based on short left-to-right or forward-to-back movements of the legs and arms. Movements are drawn from a range of familiar and easy-to-learn dance moves from local dance traditions as well as dance moves gleaned from films and music videos. Similar to the above discussion of the indexicality of popular music in Sufi contexts, this section explores how familiar and easy-to-learn line dances further encouraged participation in Islamic school *mawlid*. I detail the introduction and evolution of Hindi film choreographies in the *mawlid* from the 1960s to the present.

In Tamale’s school *mawlid*, most song-and-dance segments comprise two or three identifiable sections, pairing a short and easy to learn movement or set of movements with a corresponding melody and rhythm. The lead dancer faces four or

²³² With this increasing popularity, Ghana has since developed its own gospel musical industry (Carl 2015, 47-55).

²³³ This phenomenon is of course not exclusive to the African context. There are many other regional examples, such as in 1950s and 1960s Taiwan, when Christian missionaries and priests from Italy, Switzerland, and Canada began to re-word already existing folk songs into Christian hymns there (Tan 2012, 27).

five horizontal lines of dancers, and begins the performance by demonstrating the song and dance segment to the group. The group then performs the dance, and both the leader and the group continue to dance and sing this segment until the drummer signals to change to the next melody. This format provides newcomers time to familiarise themselves with each new movement, so that dances can be learned quickly and easily through association, prompts, and visual cues. Melinda Russell offers a similar study of participatory line dancing with concern to the Macarena, a popular dance with easy to follow arm movements that emerged in the US in the 1990s. She suggests that inclusive dances like the Macarena centre around simple movements, with easily executable moves that can be taught in a couple of minutes (Russell 2013, 174). For example, in the Macarena, a DJ or other leader faces the crowd and verbally describes or physically demonstrates the dance movements; new dancers rely on their peers to learn, copying the movements of those next to or in front of them (*ibid*, 178).²³⁴ As Juliana Flinn similarly notes of country line dancing in the US, line dancing focuses on the group cohesion rather than individual technique, and emphasis remains on the synchronicity of the whole group (Flinn 1995, 66-67).

Inside Tamale's Tijani classrooms, teachers draw on participatory modes of practice to engage youth, including cyclical left-right and forward-backward movements. Teachers seek to bypass extensive training, developing choreographies that allow newcomers to "come alive" in a performance regardless of prior experience.²³⁵ The "coming alive" of bodies in performance is similar to what John Blacking terms "bodily resonance", creating "the experience of falling into phase" with other players and performers around you (Blacking 1983, 57).²³⁶ Along the same lines, Greg Downey writes how *capoeira* dancers tune in to one another by listening through their bodies, becoming "emphatically intercorporeal" in the process (Downey 2002, 502). In the *mawlid* practice, "falling into phase" is accomplished through the use of cyclical and short movements in the classroom, as well as through the use of familiar dance movements gleaned from popular films and videos. Like film song melodies,

²³⁴ A similar phenomenon is the Cha Cha Slide, by American artist DJ Casper, that became popular at school dances, proms, roller skating rinks, and weddings in the US, Canada, and the UK during the 2000s. In the recorded song, the DJ offers clear directions on how to move throughout the song.

²³⁵ As Matthew Rahaim suggests, there is a difference between the *musicking body* and the *paramparic body*: while the *paramparic body* develops over years of training, the *musicking body* is the body that comes alive during performance (Rahaim 2012, 8-9). Islamic school teachers seek to bypass the *paramparic* body through indexical movements, that give participants instant access to the *musicking* body.

²³⁶ Some teachers view the practice as teaching and preparing youth for the practice of group *dhikr*, the repetition of the name Allah or prayers either in silence (*dhikr khafi*) or aloud (*dhikr jahri*). Conversation with religious scholar F on 12 January 2018.

school teachers rely on the indexicality of mediated choreographies to encourage participation.

In Tamale, the *mawlid* choreography draws on a patchwork of movements from a variety of mediated and non-mediated sources, that layer onto the performance practice over time. During my time in Tamale, I saw a range of old and new movements from a range of contexts referenced in practice: in one practice, smaller children danced *takai*, a traditional Dagbamba dance associated with the Damba festival.²³⁷ When singing the national Ghanaian anthem in Arabic, children marched in a military style, as Islamic school teachers proclaim them “Children of God”. In another practice, I saw choreography explicitly referencing Islamic prayer poses, such as *sujud* and *salam* while pulsing their shoulders and elbows outward to the beat of the drummers, similar to *agbadza* (see Audio-Visual Example 8).²³⁸ While Hindi film choreographies were likely the first foreign mediated dance style to be included in the performance practice, there have been other mass mediated foreign choreographies included in Tamale’s *mawlid* performances since. Recent examples include choreographies from the Congolese dancer Awilo Longomba, dabbing from Atlanta hip hop culture, dance moves of local hiplife stars like Fancy Gadam, and the Southern dance craze *azonto* (which grew to popularity in Ghana about ten years ago). The most recent inclusion is the “one corner” dance craze, which developed out of Swedru, Ghana in 2017 and has circulated around Tamale via WhatsApp videos on youth’s mobile phones (see Audio-Visual Example 9).²³⁹

Mass media has long been an important conduit for circulating and popularising dance movements (Dodds 2014, 452). Early examples include the influence of foreign dance movements shown in Ghana’s early cinema halls, that were adopted and adapted into local theatrical performances. For example, Catherine Cole notes how as far back as the 1920s, dancers in Accra were copying choreographies seen in Cowboy and Vaudeville silent picture shows to use in their own variety shows at local theatres

²³⁷ Blankenship describes Takai as “a group dance performed with male dancers in a full circle wearing traditional smocks (*binnymaa*). The dance includes several movements, or sections, each with different dance steps with some including a hitting of sticks between two dancers” (Blankenship 2014, 88).

²³⁸ Jane Desmond writes that scholars must account for the changes in performance style and ideological meaning when the movements are transferred to new contexts (Desmond 1993, 41). For example, in the *mawlid* performances I witnessed in 2016, the blending of the *sujud* prayer pose with *agbadza* movements highlights the adoption of a localised Islam, fusing Islamic practice with traditional performance (Frishkopf 2008, 484).

²³⁹ In Audio-Visual Example 9, from the “selection” part of practice in 2017, boys are also drawing from Fancy Gadam’s dance moves, as seen at 1:17 at <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYLONguvRi8>> underscoring the popularity of local hiplife stars dance moves amongst youth.

(2001, 73). As cinemas in Tamale arrived only after Independence in 1957, Hindi film dances were likely some of the first choreographies to be viewed on screen in Tamale, introducing new kinds of movement from regions further afield. Oral histories and archival recollections hint at the influence that Hindi film choreographies had on youth dance practices during this period. For example, in a newspaper article detailing postcolonial experiences of cinema in a Southern Ghanaian Muslim migrant community, the journalist explains how: “the day that an Indian film came to town was always special, the Zongo community cinema-goers sometimes dressed the part for the show...Before long all the school girls and boys learnt to sing and dance the Indian way” (Akumanyi 1986).²⁴⁰ Writing about Tamale during the 1970s, Abdulai and Chernoff (n.d. a) also note how “the songs and dance styles of Indian films have found their way into the artistic repertoire of Dagbamba youth in the Simpa music that they play at communal occasions”.²⁴¹ In an oral history interview in 2016, a former Islamic school student recalled of his youth growing up during the 1960s:

I used to participate in the *mawlid* when I was young. We would dance Indian songs as a prelude to the main activity, and try to imitate the movies in our dress. But we would sing in our mother tongue: Dagbani, Hausa, and also in Arabic. The melody would be Indian, and we would dance Indian as well.²⁴²

These recollections make clear that Hindi film dance styles were being adapted outside of the cinema hall, on the school yard, in Simpa performances, and in the *mawlid*. What is less clear, however, is what kinds of movements were being adapted.

The height of Hindi film circulation in Tamale was between the 1960s and the 1990s, a period in which Hindi film dance style was incredibly eclectic and ever-changing. Sangita Shresthova writes that the style of postcolonial Hindi film dance sequences of the pre-Bollywood era (pre-1990) can best be described as pastiche, as films mixed and borrowed movements from a variety of regional choreographies as well as foreign circulating dance styles (2011, 18-19). Some common dance styles from the pre-1990s include the cabaret dance style performed by “vamp” characters, whose dance style reflected courtesan dances, with footwork and features similar to Northern

²⁴⁰ As detailed in Chapter Two, Zongos are migrant communities in Ghana’s Southern major cities. Zongos are typically majority Muslim communities, as many living in these neighbourhoods are traders who come from Northern Ghana, and from other majority Muslim regions, including Mali, Burkina Faso, and Northern Nigeria.

²⁴¹ Hindi film choreographies from the cinema were adopted and adapted in dance cultures elsewhere during this period, such as in Dakar and Istanbul (Iordanova 2006, 125; Gurata 2010, 84).

²⁴² Interview with former GBC radio host on 6 November, 2016.

Indian Kathak dance (*ibid*, 28). Dancing in early Hindi films was associated with eroticism, often representing a metaphor for sexual encounters, part of a much longer history surrounding perceptions of female dancers as prostitutes rather than professional performers (*ibid*, 13; Morcom 2013, 129). Some of the first Hindi films to circulate in Tamale during the 1960s would have depicted the “good” heroine as dancing in a “restrained” style while “bad” female leads (such as a courtesan or modern vamp) openly danced throughout a film (Morcom 2013, 116).

In the 1970s and 1980s, dance styles in Hindi films became more eclectic, as choreographies drew from an even greater pool of foreign dance styles (Arnold 1988; Shresthova 2011, 29). This is seen in popular films like *Disco Dancer* (1982), a Hindi film that was popular in Tamale, that included disco dance moves mixed with folk dance movements (Shresthova 2011, 29). The heroine-vamp dance dichotomy in Hindi films became blurred in the 1980s, when heroines started dancing as well, however under circumstances that maintained the heroine’s respectability and “pureness” (*ibid*, 29-30). For example, in the film *Loha* (1987), one of the most popular Hindi films in Tamale to date, the heroines have to dance on various occasions in order to distract and escape evil villains keeping them captive. In the film, dance scenes such as “Patli Kamar Lambe Baal” feature short, repetitive hand movements that would have been easy for Tamale viewers to learn and replicate. These movements are quite similar to those found in contemporary *mawlid* performances.

During the late 1980s and into the early 1990s, there were important shifts in the history of Hindi film dance styles following liberalisation, which likely influenced the *mawlid* choreography as well. In India, the post-liberalisation era of the 1990s saw the commercialisation of Indian cinema and a subsequent Bollywood dance craze, evidenced both in the choreography of Bollywood films, but also in community Bollywood dance classes and wedding performances that grew in popularity during this time (Morcom 2013, 118). By the 1990s, choreography shifted towards a de-eroticised style, featuring formalised and repetitive and symmetric sequences of two or four movements (*ibid*, 125). These dances differ greatly from bar girl choreographies of earlier Hindi film scenes, whose seductive dances appear as spontaneous and improvised (*ibid*). In contrast, 1990s Bollywood song sequences were gender-neutral and desexualised, as both females and males performed near-identical moves that showcased their strength and energy rather than one’s seductiveness (*ibid*).

The increase in televisions and VHS players in Tamale in the late 1980s meant that Islamic school teachers could bring Hindi film dance choreography straight into the classroom. In a conversation with a former student now in his late-twenties, he remembered learning to mimic dance moves for the *mawlid* by watching Hindi films on VHS.²⁴³ He recalled standing in a line in his classroom, watching Hindi film dance scenes such as those from *Dus Numbri* (1976) and mimicking the movements for use in the *mawlid*. Another religious leader similarly recalled playing VHS videos of Hindi films in his school during this time, to teach children the dances while also familiarising them with film song melodies used in the practices.²⁴⁴ Many of the group dances found in early Bollywood films of the 1990s are similar to the line dance choreographies in contemporary *mawlid* choreographies. For example, the choreography for “Koi Ladki Hai” from *Dil To Pagal Hai* (1997) (a film that was also quite popular in Tamale) feels very similar to line dance styles in Tamale’s contemporary school *mawlid* performances. In the beginning of the scene, children stand in line formations and dance short left-right segments after which they jump to face a different direction and repeat that same synchronised segment again. This dance style was common to *mawlid* performances in the schools I attended in 2017 and 2018. While it was difficult to get concrete information on the history of *mawlid* choreography in Tamale, it is very possible that dance choreographies such as “Koi Ladki Hai” influenced the current structure and form of *mawlid* choreographies.

The Iconicity of Hindi Film Songs in Islamic School Mawlid

In both Christian and Sufi contexts, musicians and religious leaders choose popular genres strategically, seeking to show how the popular musical genres they use are either in line with their faith, or index their broader religious community. For example, *Fayḍa* hip hop artists in Senegal “play up aesthetic resonances between Hip Hop and *Fayḍa* adherents’ self-imagination as a mystical and cosmopolitan movement”, reading the “forceful gesticulations and pronouncements” of hip hop and rap as akin to moral urgencies of Islamic preachers (Hill 2017, 3-4). With the rise of mass communications media in 1980s Ghana, foreign popular music and foreign dance styles circulated into many disparate regions, working to establish mass indices between different evangelical churches, aiding in the formation of a global evangelical Christian community at that time (Coleman 2000; see also Wagner 2013, 3-4). At this time,

²⁴³ Conversation with younger radio show host on 21 July, 2016.

²⁴⁴ Interview with religious scholar E on 16 October, 2016.

Christian communities sought to connect to a global charismatic Christian faith by listening to American gospel cassettes (Agordoh 2004, 5-6). In this section, I show how Tijani Islamic school teachers in Tamale similarly drew from the popular music available to them at that time, choosing music that best associated their faith with a broader Islamicate community. Given their availability, Hindi film songs were deemed suitable for Tijani teachers, who heard these songs as sounding similar to other music emanating from a broader Islamic sound world.

Although Islam has had a long-standing presence in Africa, Arabic language films and music from the Arab world did not reach many towns and cities nearer the coastal regions of West Africa until the latter half of the twentieth century, and were not widespread until very recently, with the advent of high speed internet (Charry 2000b, 545-573). This was especially true for a city like Tamale, situated on the geographic fringes of Muslim West Africa, and enveloped in a majority Christian coastal country. The lack of availability of music from the Arab world could be partly to do with the colonial banning of Arabic language media in West Africa, mentioned in Chapter Two (Genova 2013, 35-38). It is likely that the ban on Arabic language films impacted the circulation of such media in the Gold Coast as well, especially for film reels, as they typically travelled throughout the subcontinent for screenings. Through an examination of film censorship records stored at the PRAAD office in Accra, as well as cinema listings in Ghana's major newspapers, it is clear that the demise of Arabic language Egyptian and Moroccan films coincided with the rise of Hindi films during the 1950s.²⁴⁵ For example, between 1955 and early 1957, the Gold Coast censorship board screened and approved twenty-two Hindi films, while they only screened four Egyptian films (see Appendix A).²⁴⁶ In the cinema listings of Ghana's major newspapers between 1951 and 1969, there are just under twenty Arabic language film titles listed as playing in Ghana's cinema halls with very little frequency (just under sixty individual showings during this period). In contrast, there are over three hundred different Hindi film titles listed as playing at Ghanaian cinemas during this period (see Appendix B). From the listings I have seen, there were at least 4,600 individual showings of Hindi films throughout Ghana during this period.²⁴⁷ In his

²⁴⁵ Ghanaian newspapers with cinema listings include *Daily Graphic*, the *Liberator*, *Spectator Daily*, the *Ashanti Pioneer*, and the *Ghanaian Times*.

²⁴⁶ "Board of Control for Censorship of Cinematography Films, 1955-1957." PRAAD-Accra, RG3/5/62.

²⁴⁷ This list is not comprehensive, as Indian films lacked the same kind of comprehensive publicity materials as other films in the region during the 1950s (McFeely 2015, 292). At the same time, many cinema halls were not listed in newspaper listings at all, such as all of the Northern cinema halls in Ghana.

exploration of recorded music, Eric Clarke notes how the rise of recorded music expanded “musical horizons by making a previously unimaginable diversity of music available to an unprecedented number of people” (2007, 37). This is clearly evidenced in the case of Hindi film song circulation in Ghana, wherein the early post-colonial period, people were exposed to countless Hindi film songs in the cinema. At the same time, diversity is regulated by those in positions of power, including governments and colonial rulers who can censor music or ban films. It is also controlled by cinema businesses and distributors, who ultimately choose what kinds of film and music are purchased or rented in order to be screened in cinema halls.

By the mid-twentieth century, Hindi film songs were the most widely available form of non-Western music in Tamale. During my fieldwork, teachers often explained that part of their reason for using Hindi film songs in practice was because they sounded “just like music from the Arab world”.²⁴⁸ As mentioned in Chapter Two, Hindi films were popular amongst Muslim communities in Ghana in part for their Islamicate iconography, a term defined by Mashall Hodgson as the “social and cultural complex historically associated with Islam and the Muslims, both among Muslims themselves and even when found among non-Muslims” (Hodgson quoted in Kesavan 1994, 247). In the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s Tamale, it was not only the visual iconography of Hindi films that linked this media to a broader Islamic world. There were also sonic resemblances, including melismatic melody lines, the grain of the voice, and scalar patterns that linked Hindi film songs to a broader Islamic world for many Muslim listeners in Ghana.²⁴⁹ In addition, many teachers picked up on the use of borrowed Arabic words in older Hindi film song lyrics. As Urdu is both the *lingua franca* of North Indian literature and also the common language of Hindi films, teachers heard Urdu’s Perso-Arabic vocabulary in film songs, drawing this music symbolically closer to music of the Arabic speaking world (Dwyer 2006, 103; Ganti 2013, 21).²⁵⁰ One of Tamale’s Islamic school leaders detailed the parallels between learning Qur’anic recitation and learning to sing Hindi film songs in Tamale, explaining that “we find Indian songs very easy as we learn Arabic. If you know

²⁴⁸ Interview with religious scholar A on 17 October, 2016.

²⁴⁹ Richard Shain writes that “Indian film soundtracks are [familiar] to African ears [that are] already sensitized to Arab and Persian musics” (2002, 89). In his discussion of Indian *taarab* music in Kenya, Andrew Eisenberg echoes this sentiment, explaining that while each “Bollywood *contrafacta*” on the continent has a unique sound and represents a unique engagement with the music, the Indian melodies, rhythms, and timbres are not wholly foreign to many listeners (2017, 337).

²⁵⁰ This is compounded by the fact that many Arabic loan words are found in local languages too: for example, the word for world (*duniya*) is the same in Arabic, Persian, Urdu, and Hausa.

Arabic, to get Indian songs is very easy for you, to get them into your ears.”²⁵¹ With regards to “learning Arabic”, most Tijani Islamic school students in Tamale are unable to speak Arabic, and as such, “knowing Arabic” has more to do with practices of listening to the sounded recitation than it has to do with contextual understanding of the language. As such, this teacher is pointing to a similarity between vocal approach and style. Using the vocal qualities of popular artists as a pedagogical tool for teaching Qur’anic recitation is not uncommon in other regional contexts. For example, in Indonesia, Anne Rasmussen notes that her recitation teacher urged students to listen to cassettes of the “great singers of the Arab world” including Umm Kulthum, Fayruz, and Warda, describing the cassettes as “music of the Qur’an” (Rasmussen 2001, 35). Similarly, Virginia Danielson describes Umm Kulthum’s vocal colour in terms of vocal qualities of *bahha* (hoarseness) and *ghunna* (nasality) that are drawn from Qur’anic recitation and religious songs (Danielson 1997, 148).

When scholars say that Hindi songs sound “just like” Arab music, they are engaging in an iconic process, where the resemblance or likeness of a sign (melisma, modes, etc.) and what it stands for (Arab music) are established by the perceiver (Islamic school teachers in Tamale) (Turino 1999, 222 and 234). Because the iconic process is specific to the perceiver, there can be many varied (or polysemic) understandings of what a sign resembles. In other words, music can “mean different things to different people different things at different times, or even to mean many things at once” (Slevc and Patel 2011, 111). Iconic interpretations are an imaginative process that have far more to do with the internal context of the perceiver than any intended meanings established by the composer or creator (*ibid*, 237; Turino 2008, 7-8).²⁵² Thus, while the relationship between older Hindi film songs and the Arab world might seem a stretch for some, Hindi film songs resembled a broader Islamicate world for Muslims in Tamale during a period in which very little Arab music circulated.

While resemblances between Hindi film songs and the Islamic world are imagined by listeners in Tamale, there are real, tangible links between the sounds of older Hindi film music and Persian musical traditions, as many Hindi film song composers were trained in North Indian light-classical and classical styles that grew out of the Indo-Persian world (Arnold 1991, 124; Dwyer 2006, 103; Manuel 1991, 357; Manuel 1993, 92). North Indian music has a long history of Arabic and Persian

²⁵¹ Conversation with religious leader A in Tamale on 10 November 2016.

²⁵² As Yurchak suggests, such imaginative processes are particularly creative in regions where the “object” is difficult to access (2006, 195).

influences: as early as the eleventh century, and into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, foreign musical styles, particularly from Iran, became common to North Indian courts, resulting in a broader synthesis of musical styles in Northern India (Jairazbhoy 1995, 17; Cornell 2007, 82). At that time, Sufi musician and poet Amir Khusraw introduced a variety of Persian and Arabic elements into North Indian music, such as new vocal forms including *Qaul* (the origin of *qawwālī*) as well as *rāgs* and *tals* (Jairazbhoy 1995, 17 and 122). New musical instruments including the *sitar* and *tabla* were associated with Muslim hereditary occupational specialist families were also introduced into Indian classical music at this time (*ibid*, 17 and 122; Kippen 2017, 122).

As Rachel Dwyer notes, there is no such thing in India as “Muslim music”, however there are genres associated with Muslims, such as *ghazals*, which Manuel terms a “Muslim specialty” (Dwyer 2006, 109; Manuel 1991, 357). Early Hindi film song orchestras consisted of instruments and styles associated with Indian classical music, such as the *tabla* and the harmonium as well as the *sitar* and *sarod* (Arnold 1991, 15). With the coming of sound in post-1931 films, many Muslim actors, producers, and directors entered the Hindi film industry, and musicians from North India further introduced North Indian classical style into the film genre. For example, Naushad Ali, who was born in Lucknow, composed many popular songs for the film industry based on Hindustani *rags* (*ibid*, 124; Dwyer 2006, 99). He was known to compose film songs with a more “classical feel”, and became famous for composing films set in Mughal times, though he also drew from Indian folk music traditions, as is evidenced in the soundtrack for *Mother India* (Dwyer 2006, 109).²⁵³ Of course, Hindi film songs are eclectic and draw from a variety of musical styles and traditions (Arnold 1988). However, for listeners in post-colonial Tamale, Hindi film songs had far more sonic and aesthetic similarities with Arab and Persian music than other foreign Western popular music circulating in Tamale at that time.²⁵⁴

Though Hindi film songs comprised the majority of foreign melodies used by *mawlid* teachers, they were not the only melodies borrowed from elsewhere. Tamale’s religious scholars and teachers who had studied abroad in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and

²⁵³ The Indian records housed at the GBC feature composers such as Naushad Ali and Narhar Chitalkar Ramchandra, who were both trained in North India. Ramchandra was known for classical musical elements as well as for introducing jazz and dance tunes into Hindi film music (Saibal and Gulzar 2003, 538).

²⁵⁴ For examples of the kinds of foreign circulating American popular music and Nigerian pop, funk, and soul music available in Tamale at that time, see Chernoff (1985, 122) and Mahama (2012, 77 and 131).

Sudan in the 1960s and 1970s brought records and cassettes with them upon their return home. Melodies from these cassettes were directly integrated into *mawlid* praises taught in schools as well. In a conversation with a leader of a Tijani school in Tamale, he detailed the use of foreign cassettes in the *mawlid* at this time:

Katie: What other songs or melodies would you incorporate in the *mawlid*?

Afa: There were Hindi songs, but also songs from Sudan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. Some people travelled abroad during this time to study in these areas, and when they came back they brought cassettes with them. When they came to the *mawlid*, they would offer up songs to go with the *mawlid*.²⁵⁵

By setting *mawlid* praises to melodies circulating from Sudan, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt, teachers brought their schools into close dialogue with the broader Islamic world. Just as Black British jazz musicians locate jazz authenticity in embodied and aesthetic particularities, such as mannerisms, expressive gestures, or the use of a Southern American accent (Dueck 2013, 106-107), the circulation of aesthetic discourses embedded in cassettes from Egypt, Sudan, and Saudi Arabia were drawn upon and calibrated by Tijani school teachers, who were seeking to extend the reach of their Islamic public. Hindi film songs performed a similar sonic labour to Egyptian, Saudi Arabian, and Sudanese cassettes: the melismatic, ornamented melodies of early Hindi film song melodies sounded similar to the recitation style taught in Tamale's Islamic schools. The reason why Hindi film songs are most commonly used in the *mawlid* is likely to do with their availability: cassettes from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan were brought back via individuals, while Hindi films were mass distributed across the country by Lebanese cinema owners and businessmen. As noted above, religious scholars had thousands of opportunities to watch Hindi films in the cinema halls, and as mentioned in Chapter Five, the advent of cassettes in the 1980s made it so that Hindi film songs were widely available. As one religious scholar recalled of writing praise songs for his *mawlid* practices in the 1980s:

You could buy cassettes 'anywhere and everywhere' in Tamale, and you could even hear a person in your neighbourhood listening to an Indian song on cassette and then borrow that cassette to listen to the song to make a *mawlid* song.²⁵⁶

²⁵⁵ Interview with religious scholar A in Tamale on 12 December 2017.

²⁵⁶ Interview with religious scholar E in Tamale, Ghana on October 16 2016.

The oldest example of a Tamale school *mawlid* praise song based on a Hindi film song melody that I encountered during my research dated from the 1960s. I first heard this song from a friend while visiting her one evening in 2016. After discussing her experience attending Islamic school in the 1960s, she sang a medley of songs from her time participating in the *mawlid*, one of which I recognised as borrowing the melody from “Raat Suhani”, a song from the 1957 film *Rani Rupmati*. My friend’s rendition is available as Audio-Visual Example 10, and the accompanying *mawlid* praise lyrics are as follows:

“Tamorru Layaalee”	
Tamorru Layaalee	Days are running fast
Be naf see wamalee	With my life and my wealth
Fayaa Qawmee Layaalee	Oh my people and your days
Anil Mawti Yati	On death is coming
Tuareeqee Toweelun	My journey is far
Wa Zaadee Qaleelun	My treasure is little
Fayaa Qawmee Layaalee	Oh my people and your days
Anil Mawti Yati	On death is coming
Anil Mawti Yati	On death is coming
Tuareeqee Toweelun	My journey is far
Wa Zaadee Qaleelun	My treasure is little
Fayaa Qawmee Layaalee	Oh my people and your days
Anil Mawti Yati	On death is coming
<i>Transliterated Arabic text and subsequent translation to English done by Abdul Mugisu Hussein Abubakari in Tamale in November 2016.</i>	

The song “Raat Suhani” would have been heard in Ghana’s major cinema halls, as is evidenced in Kumasi’s *Ashanti Pioneer* newspaper cinema listings, where *Rani Rupmati* appears nearly every week throughout 1960 and 1961.²⁵⁷ This is a historical

²⁵⁷ In the cinema listings of the *Ashanti Pioneer*, *Rani Rupmati* is advertised as playing at the Royal cinema in Kumasi on 30 July 1960, 24 May 1960, 17 January 1961 and 20 January 1961. *Rani Rupmati* played at the Rex cinema in Kumasi on 23 May 1960, 29 July 1960 and 21 January 1961, at the Roxy cinema on 25 May 1960, 28 July 1960, and 16 January 1961, and also at the Rivoli cinema in Kumasi on 18 January, 1961. As film reels rotated between cinemas and cities during this time, it is highly likely that these film reels moved on to Tamale following their screening in Kumasi, however there is no empirical evidence to support this, as film screenings for Tamale were never published in newspapers.

film detailing the love story of Baz Bahadur (the last Sultan of Malwa) and Roopmati (a Hindu singer), who in actuality were married according to both Muslim and Hindu rites in India during the sixteenth century. As such, the film features a range of Islamicate iconographies (such as Muslim characters and Arabic loan words) that might have made the film especially popular with Muslim communities in West Africa.

Music for *Rani Rupmati* was composed by Shri Nath Tripathi, who was born near Lucknow in the early twentieth century and trained in Hindustani classical music at Marris College in Lucknow (Premchand 2018, 438-439). Because this film explores both Islamic and Hindu cultures, Tripathi blends music and instrumentation from North Indian classical music with South Indian musical elements too. For example, the instrumental sections of “Raat Suhani” feature an exchange between a sarod (a Northern Indian stringed instrument) and a bamboo flute (associated with the Hindu god Krishna) (Reck 2017, 354). Such instruments were likely meant to symbolise the romantic exchange between the lead characters in the film, who represent the marriage of Hinduism and Islam. This blend of instrumentation was particularly popular in Northern Ghana and Northern Nigeria, as musicians who played the Hausa *goje* (a two-string fiddle) and the Dagbamba *jenjili* (a one-string bow), as well as flute players in the region could easily replicate this song. For example, when listening to the recorded example “Simpa flute group excerpt” from the accompanying cassette for Chernoff’s *African Rhythm and African Sensibility* (1981), a recording made in Tamale, the group sings “Raat Suhani” accompanied by flute. Similarly, Adamu notes how street musicians in Northern Nigeria played “Raat Suhani” on the *goje* with vocals and *kalangu* (talking drum) during the 1960s and 1970s (2008, 162).

In the context of the *mawlid*, “Raat Suhani” was suitable for Islamic school praises as it was melismatic, an aspect often discussed in Tamale in relation to the call to prayer and Qur’anic recitation. As one religious scholar in Tamale noted:

That’s where the relationship is – Indians will sing, when they sing they make sounds which just look the same as when we do call for prayers... we take a syllable and put it on different notes. Indian songs, they do the same thing.²⁵⁸

Hindi film song melodies chosen for the *mawlid* often feature longer melismatic melodies, or what is often referred to in Tamale as bending or twisting the voice. Melismatic melodies reflect pre-existing *mawlid* traditions: as Janet Topp Fargion notes

²⁵⁸ Interview with religious scholar C in Tamale, Ghana on 5 November 2016.

of Zanzibari *maulidi*, performance traditions “include long vocal melismas performed by the Sheikh” (Topp Fargion 2007, liner notes 10). *Bandiri* music of Northern Nigeria also features “phrasing not similar to the glides of Indian songs” (Buba 1999, 39). As well as melismatic melody, “Raat Suhani” also features a scalar pattern (one, flat three, four, five, and flat seven) that is quite commonly used by Islamic school teachers for the *mawlid*. It seems that many older Hindi film song melodies drawn for *mawlid* praise songs are based on this pattern. For example, another *mawlid* song performed in a school *mawlid* in 2017 was based on the Hindi film song “Pancchi Banoon Udti Phiroon” (As a Bird I want to Fly) from the film *Chori Chori* (1956) (see Audio-Visual Example 11). Like “Raat Suhani, this song draws on notes 1, flat 3, four, five, and flat seven. Interestingly, this scale pattern is similar to the anhemitonic pentatonic scale, that are found in other Dagbamba and Hausa musical traditions (DjeDje 1984, 171).

As mentioned in Chapter Two, traditional *qawwālī*, a genre of Sufi music best classified as North Indian light classical song, also made its way into Hindi films in the 1930s, following the advent of popular recorded *qawwālīs* (Morcom 2007, 72-73; Qureshi 1999, 69-73). A traditional *qawwālī* song consists of a poem and a strophic musical setting, that repeats themes of mystical love (Qureshi 1994, 508). The main purpose of traditional *qawwālī* is to “guide the Sufi toward mystical knowledge and to arouse mystical emotion to the state of spiritual ecstasy” (Qureshi 1994, 505). Though originally a sacred Sufi music of North India, *qawwālī* developed its secular identity and entertainment function when it was recorded as a popular song genre on gramophone records, beginning in the 1930s (Qureshi 1999, 69-73). Popular *qawwālī* songs eventually found their way into Hindi films post-1931, and have since been stylistically influenced by the film song genre (Morcom 2007, 72-73; Qureshi 1999, 69-73). In Hindi films, popular *qawwālī* songs retain some traditional features, such as group singing, hand clapping, and Hindi-Urdu lyrics (Morcom 2007, 80; Qureshi 1999, 83). Directors usually choose *qawwālī* songs in relation to Muslim subjects and characters, to invoke an Islamicate atmosphere (Morcom 2007, 82; Qureshi 1999, 82).

Some film *qawwālīs* screened in Tamale have been used in *mawlid* performances, with their lyrics changed to Arabic in praise of the Prophet. One example of this is the melody from the main title track of the 1980 Hindi film *Qurbani*. During my time spent at an Islamic school in Tamale in 2016, the “Qurbani” film song melody was performed to praise God during *mawlid* celebrations and at wedding ceremonies. This film song was written by Urdu poet and film lyricist Faruk Kaiser,

and like other Hindi film *qawwālīs*, “Qurbani” features hand clapping throughout. The film scene showcases the practice of *qurbani*, or sacrifice, paralleling the overarching plot of the film, in which the lead character sacrifices himself to the antagonists to save his friends’ lives. The lyrics include key Urdu and Persian words such as Allah, *qurbani* (sacrifice), and *imaan* (faith):

Transliterated Hindi Lyrics for “Qurbani”	English Translation
O wai wai tujh pe qurban meri jaan Mera dil mera imaan Tujhpe qurban meri jaan Mera dil mera imaan Yaari meri kehti hai Yaar pe karde sab qurban	I’ll give my life for you My heart and my faith I’ll give my life for you My heart and my faith My friendship says that Sacrifice is everything for your friend
Qurbani, Qurbani, Qurbani Allah ko pyari hai qurbani Qurbani, Qurbani, Qurbani Allah ko pyari hai qurbani	Sacrifice, Sacrifice, Sacrifice God loves sacrifice Sacrifice, Sacrifice, Sacrifice God loves sacrifice

For an emerging urban Muslim community in the 1980s, the language used throughout the song implies a symbolic link between Hindi films and the Arab world. In Tamale, the word “qurbani” is familiar, as it relates to the practice of sacrifice during *Eid al-Adha*, where Muslim communities sacrifice livestock to remember Ibrahim’s sacrifice in obedience to God. It is unsurprising, then, that this popularised film version of a Sufi praise practice from India has been picked up by Sufi communities in Tamale, who use these melodies in their own popular praise performances. In this *mawlid* example, lyrics have been altered from a song about sacrifice for to a song of love and devotion for God:

Dagbani <i>mawlid</i> praise based on “Qurbani” melody	English Translation
<p>Verse:</p> <p>Solluu Alaa habiibinaa huwa khairul mukhtari Solluu Alaa nabiyyi naa huwa khairul anaami Solluu Alaa nabiyyi naa huwa khairul anaam</p> <p>Refrain:</p> <p>Yaa Rabbi Yaa Rabbi Yaa Allah Anta Mawlānā Yaa Allah Yaa Rabbi Yaa Rabbi Yaa Allah Anta Mawlānā Yaa Allah</p>	<p>Verse:</p> <p>Let’s seek mercy for our lover, He is the best selected one Let’s seek mercy for our messenger, He is the best of mankind Let’s seek mercy for our messenger, He is the best of mankind</p> <p>Refrain:</p> <p>Oh Lord, Oh Lord, Oh Allah You are our Leader, Oh Allah Oh Lord, Oh Lord, Oh Allah You are our Leader, Oh Allah</p>
<p><i>Transliterated Arabic text and subsequent translation to English by Abdul Mugisu Hussein Abubakari in Tamale in January 2018.</i></p>	

In recent years, the rise of the internet has meant that youth today have greater access to much broader religious networks and much broader access to popular media than there once was in Tamale in the 1960s and 1970s. With access to sound recordings of Islamic leaders from throughout the world circulating online, via bluetooth, and through messages on their phones, youth can now fashion themselves after an Islamic elsewhere. Alongside sound clips, videos from the Arab world have Islamic school teachers rethinking their *mawlid* performance practices. For example, one Islamic school teacher described how:

When clips, you know videos started coming in, when Arab videos started coming in, we saw the Arab drums, the style of it. Now we are thinking we can just replace Simpa drums with these particular Arab drums, and that will suit it very well since we are also using Arab language in our *mawlid*.²⁵⁹

With the transition to a new “Bollywood sound” in the 1990s, Hindi film songs became less Indo-Persian, with the rise of popular music drawing more so on Western musical influences. At the same time, there is increasing access to Arabic language music via

²⁵⁹ Interview with religious scholar B on 15 November 2016.

the internet in Tamale. It is possible that in future, new teachers will seek out melodies from new kinds of Arab popular music, that are increasingly available and circulating throughout the region.

Semantic Snowballing and Generational Change in the Mawlid

While for the above reasons, it is less likely that original Hindi film song melodies will be sourced by teachers for use in the *mawlid* in future, older film melodies are still likely to be found in the Islamic school *mawlid*, as the melodies are embedded within songs passed down between generations. Some of the *mawlid* songs discussed here have been performed over decades, and have become so deeply embedded within some *mawlid* repertoires that the melodies are no longer recognisable to youth as film songs. Many songs are passed down from one scholar to the next within the same school. Other songs move between schools when Islamic school teachers move schools, or when a teacher passing by another school practice or performance “lifts” the song for his own school performances for future years.²⁶⁰ As one religious scholar explains:

after taking it from Indian songs and then using it as *mawlid* songs, and then maybe if another [teacher] wants to use the same Indian song in his own mankaranta, then it already has its song. The mallam will just take that particular song and also pass it on...and because other people were also there recording it, eventually it was there for them to pass it on from one generation to another.²⁶¹

Also common is that *mawlid* songs travel with women who grow up in one area learning a particular repertoire, and then marry and move to a new neighbourhood, assisting at the new schools where their children attend. As one informant explained of his mother:

My mother did *mawlid* as a young girl up to her teens. During that time, they would turn Indian songs into Arabic songs for the *mawlid*. When she moved after marriage, she taught some of the songs she learned [from her old school] at the Arabic school near [her new home].²⁶²

²⁶⁰ Some scholars attempt to curb this circulation: at one of the school practices I attended in 2017, they put large boards on their windows and doors during practice so that other scholars could not take their songs and dance styles from them.

²⁶¹ Interview with religious scholar A on 17 October 2016.

²⁶² Interview with Hamza Mahdi on 1 September 2016.

Women's memories and performances of popular *mawlid* compositions travel between neighbourhoods and schools as they assist with school performances in their new area following marriage. Thus, *mawlid* songs inspired from one Islamic school teacher in one neighbourhood can move a new area of town, where the original "source" of melody and choreography is potentially lost. This is compounded by the fact that new generations often only experience these melodies with Arabic lyrics, further blurring the original film context of the melody.

In contemporary school performances, younger Islamic school teachers draw on the music that is popular with today's youth. For example, in the past few years, some younger scholars have started including melodies from popular hiplife stars in the area, such as local hiplife star Fancy Gadam's songs, including "We Dey Collect" and "Tibi Ning Sheli", that make for lively performances that quickly inspire surrounding youth in the neighbourhood to join in at practices. Interestingly, the use of hiplife melodies is controversial amongst older Islamic scholars, who view these foreign melodies as unsuitable for the religious context of the *mawlid*. When I asked these same scholars about the use of Hindi film song melodies, they saw no issue with film melodies, both because the melodies had been used in the practice for so long, but also because the melodies are understood as sounding closer to music of the Islamic world than hiplife songs, that are largely associated with Western popular culture.²⁶³

Alongside popular hiplife melodies, new scholars also draw on melodies from Dagbani film songs, that are increasingly popular amongst contemporary youth. In an unexpected turn of events, many of these Dagbani film melodies are themselves drawn on Hindi film song melodies, so that Dagbani film melodies, based on Hindi film song melodies, are being used in the *mawlid*. For example, one *mawlid* song I learned in 2017 was actually based on the Dagbani film song melody "Ayizang Amang Zaa N-ti Kpenglana Naawuni" (If You Give All of Yourself to God), which is in turn based on the Hindi film song "Awara Pagal Diwara" (Wayward, Crazy, Insane) from the Hindi film *Lahoo Ke Do Rang* (Blood Has Two Colours, 1997).²⁶⁴ The Dagbani film song version is available to listen to as Audio-Visual Example 12. An example of an Islamic school version (based on the Dagbani film version) is available to listen to as Audio-

²⁶³ Conversations with religious leaders A, B, and D at three different schools in Tamale during December 2017 and January 2018.

²⁶⁴ The song was originally used in a Dagbani film, and later placed inside Adam's second 1998 song compilation albums.

Visual Example 13.²⁶⁵ Similarly, at *mawlid* practices in December 2017, I asked various dance instructors and song leaders if they noticed any popular melodies or foreign songs being used in the *mawlid*. Youth I spoke with recognised melodies from popular hiplife songs and Dagbani film songs, though the Dagbani film melodies they pointed to were based on Hindi film song melodies.²⁶⁶ These examples are indicative of a process Turino terms “semantic snowballing”. As Turino suggests, when a song is repeated in new contexts over time, they gain new and additional layers of meaning (2000, 175-176). Songs can come to signify new events or ideas, and over time “the multiple objects of the sign potentially become indexically related to each other in the minds of perceivers through the sign” (*ibid*). In this sense, the adaptation and adoption of Hindi film song in multiple and disparate contexts in Tamale has made it so that new generations borrow these melodies from sources entirely divorced from its original filmic context.

Considering the fluid nature of *mawlid* songs as they travel through generations and across schools in different towns and cities, the Hindi film song melodies they were based on become embedded within the practice. For example, one of the songs I learned in *mawlid* practice in 2017 was called “Kamariyya As-Salaam-Alaykum” (see Audio-Visual Example 14). Like many other *mawlid* songs I encountered, I was told by religious scholars in the school that this song was composed in Tamale many years ago, and was not a Hindi film song melody. However, while writing up my thesis, I was listening to playlists of older Hindi film songs, and heard the same melody in the 1962 song “Dil Tera Diwana Hai Sanam” from the film *Dil Tera Diwana*. This melody is clearly used in the *mawlid* song “Kamariyya As-Salaam-Alaykum”. As is shown in Appendix B, *Dil Tera Diwana* was circulating in Ghana during the 1960s, and is likely to have found its way into the *mawlid* during this time. It is probable that other older *mawlid* songs passed down through generations are based on Hindi film song melodies, though scholars and youth today do not recognise the filmic contexts of the melodies. The same process is taking place elsewhere, such as in folk music in North India, where Manuel notes that “many young people are first exposed to film-derived melodies upon hearing them in recycled versions by local folksingers; for such people, the primary associations of these tunes may be village life rather than cinema” (1993,

²⁶⁵ Interview with religious scholar B on 15 November 2016.

²⁶⁶ There was only one exception to this during my time at practices: in a conversation with several lead *mawlid* dancers at that school on 19 December 2017, they noted that there was only one Hindi film song melody (from “Panchi Bono Udti Phiroonfrom” from the 1956 film *Chori Chori*) used in their *mawlid*. However, I later realised that the melody was recognisable to youth because it was their Islamic school teacher’s mobile ring tone.

138). In contemporary Tamale, youth experience these Hindi film song melodies within the context of the *mawlid* rather than indexical of experiences from the cinema hall. Through the internalisation of foreign sound over time, foreign disposition becomes “deeply constitutive of local habitus” (Turino 2008, 8).

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have taken the Islamic school *mawlid* to be an important conduit for exploring boundaries and intersections between youth, education, religion, and popular music and dance in everyday life in Tamale. The study of the school *mawlid* offers a unique and rich entry point in understanding Tamale’s religious climate, and the place of popular music within Tamale’s varied Muslim communities. Rising religious conflict between Tijaniyya and the Ahlus-Sunnah communities in Tamale influenced and shaped the way that postcolonial youth express themselves in their *mawlid* practices. Hindi film songs became part of a new kind of urban repertoire that encouraged participation in the *mawlid*. At the same time, Hindi films functioned as icons, connecting the *mawlid* practice with a constellation of various other popular music genres from the Islamic world. In using these melodies, scholars garnered a sense of religious legitimacy through their perceived links to other, more distant Islamic cultures.

Today’s Tijani youth continue to negotiate their religious networks and allegiances in Tamale, taking into account their changing access to media from abroad. The melodies, instruments, and movements within the *mawlid* reflect these shifting practices over time. Though Hindi film songs have become less popular more recently, younger Islamic scholars have begun to draw on Dagbani film songs in their practices, that are popular with youth. As many of these Dagbani film songs draw from Hindi film song melodies, it is likely that Hindi film songs will continue to be used in *mawlid* performances, thanks to the “semantic snowballing” effect taking place. Such processes reveal the layered and intersecting nature of parodied music in the city, where older Hindi film song melodies lose and regain purchase dependent on their use in a variety of musical contexts. In the following chapter, I turn towards Dagbani films, exploring the use of Hindi film songs in contemporary Dagbani film music.

Chapter Seven: Popular Films and Playback Singers: The Rise of Dagbani Film Music

Introduction

Around the time that the Rivoli and Victory cinemas closed in the mid-1990s, a local film industry began to take shape in Tamale. With access to new, relatively inexpensive recording technologies, such as video recorders and cassette decks, youth created their own movies in the local language, Dagbani. From the 1990s onwards, Dagbani films have become increasingly popular with youth, who watch new Dagbani films at surviving video centres and roadside shops. Like early Hindi films, Dagbani films explore tensions of traditional and “modern” life: a villager character may attempt to alleviate their family’s poverty by sojourning in the city for wage labour. Urban life is depicted through precarious employment and the demise of strong extended family support. Such films illuminate the value of traditional life amidst an increasingly capitalist and urbanising world.²⁶⁷

As Georgina Born (2005, 26) suggests, the onset of digital media encouraged the rapid re-formation and re-creation of music and film. In other words “digital media supersede the capacity of material artefacts to stop the flow of re-creation”, allowing people to decompose, compose, and recompose music and film in a process that Born terms relayed creativity (*ibid*). The rise of digital media in Tamale in the 1990s enabled musicians to make their own films and their own accompanying soundtracks. To do so, many initially drew on structures and formulas from foreign films popular in the region. Given the popularity of Hindi films in Tamale, Dagbani film song writers adopted specific processes from the Hindi film industry, such as the role of the playback singers, diegetic song-sequences, and diegetic lip-syncing.²⁶⁸ Many (though not all) Dagbani film songs also borrowed older Hindi film song melodies during this time. Filmmakers included elements of Hindi film structure and style in part because

²⁶⁷ While in recent years I have heard of Dagbani films drawing on other genres such as action films and comedies, the social film detailed in this chapter remains the most commonly produced film style in the North at present. In fact, some Dagbani filmmakers confided in me that due to the financial struggles of filmmaking in the North, Dagbani filmmakers have reached out to Southern industries and filmmakers for financial support. Southern filmmakers who do provide support also make suggestions about how Dagbani filmmakers could make their films more successful, such as plots that revolve around crime and violence, based on what is successful in the South. This means that Southern filmmakers’ financial support goes hand in hand with major changes to Dagbani filmmaking that are not always deemed appropriate by Dagbani film viewers.

²⁶⁸ Diegetic film songs are those that are audible to film characters (such as a singer singing in the film or an instrument being played), whereas the source of non-diegetic film music (otherwise known as background music) is not a part of the scene itself, and is not audible to the film characters.

they knew this structure was popular with youth in the region, and would resonate with viewers in local video centres. Over time, these structures were moulded to fit the needs of Tamale's own viewing public, as a Dagbamba media culture emerged in its own right.

The rise of Dagbani film songs in Tamale is a turning point in the use of Hindi film songs in the region. Rather than Hindi film songs being used indexically, linking youth to a broader urban youth culture, or as icons resembling an Islamic elsewhere, Hindi film songs are used by filmmakers to tell stories about life in Tamale, with lyrics in Dagbani. These songs discuss local issues, such as unemployment, family breakdowns, and poverty, on local terms, revealing a great deal about contemporary social histories in the region. These songs circulate the city with frequency and ease.

The study of foreign cultural adaptation and appropriation in Ghanaian film is a contentious one. Some scholars and practitioners view the widespread popularity of Hindi cinema as an imposition on Ghanaian and/or Dagbamba culture. I understand processes of borrowing and copying in the Northern film industry to take place in a world where boundaries between foreign and local media, and distinctions between producer and consumer are porous and interchangeable. Karin Barber writes how consumer-oriented models of mass culture are inappropriate in the West African context, where reception and production occur in cyclical processes (Barber 1997b, 358-368; 2018, 17). Barber's observations are reflected in Dagbani playback singers' understandings of film music in Tamale: they refer to their songs as "copyrights", not in the Western sense of legal ownership, but rather in one's ability to copy the song in the "right" way, an aspect heavily dependent on one's own aesthetic tastes and those of their audience. An exploration of how Hindi film songs were adapted in Dagbani films reveals subtle changes and adjustments in the Dagbamba context over time, revealing the ever-shifting expectations and values of Tamale's viewing public.

While the Dagbani film industry has an extended history in Tamale, the industry has no written history apart from a brief mention in Mohammed Sheriff Yamusah's 2013 Master's thesis. As such, this chapter draws on the recent work of Carmela Garritano (2013) and Birgit Meyer (2015), who both focus on Akan, Fante, Ga, and English language popular videos in Ghana, as well as interviews with Dagbani filmmakers and my own participant observations on set for various films. It is important to include Dagbani films in the emerging discussion of Ghanaian popular

videos, as Northern films deal with themes of class, gender, social life, and belief systems in different ways than English or Akan popular videos do.²⁶⁹ For example, Dagbani films focus on experiences of Ghana's Muslim communities in contrast with Southern films that generally revolve around Christian ethos. As well, given that Northern Ghana is one of the poorest regions in the country, filmmakers deal with issues of poverty and wealth differently to Southern films. Such differences reflect varied regional understandings of self, family, society, and public life, making clear the distinctiveness of Ghana's varied film cultures.

This chapter details a history of Dagbani film music in Tamale from the mid-1990s to the present day in two parts. The first section is an overview of literature on, as well as a brief history of, theatre and film adaptation in the region. I begin with an overview of literature concerning foreign film reception and adaptation in Africa, contextualising some reasons for the lack of scholarship in this realm. I then discuss Indian and West African theatre traditions, detailing the similarities between the two art forms. The common ground between Hindi films and Ghana's travelling theatre in the post-colonial period hint towards broader themes that resonated with societies undergoing major socio-political and economic changes. The subsequent portion of this chapter focuses specifically on the development of the Dagbani film industry and Dagbani film songs, charting the influence of Hindi film song structures and their adaptation within the industry, as well as the changes made to Hindi film structure and themes to fit within a now established Dagbani film tradition. I detail aesthetic preferences of audiences and filmmakers, and further explore music's ability to add value to the film through emotion and affect. This second section recounts ethnographic examples from 2016 and 2017, wherein I document the entire film song writing process. This includes the commissioning of a song, the selection of a pre-existing Hindi melody, writing original Dagbani lyrics, and eventually recording a new Dagbani film song in the studio.

An Exploration of Foreign Film Adaptations in West Africa

As detailed in Chapter Two and Four, Ghana's postcolonial government sought to Africanise and nationalise the arts, and even attempted to establish their own cinema business. In early post-colonial Ghana, state films were made by a select group of

²⁶⁹ Even between English and Akan Southern Ghanaian films, there are differences between influential narratives and aesthetics that similarly require thought, discussion, and analysis (Edmondson 2011, 99).

filmmakers, who were trained and supported by the state-owned GFIC. The GFIC sought to create a distinctly Ghanaian film industry, informed by the ideologies of anti-colonialism and cultural nationalism (Garritano 2013, 48). State film corporations were also particular about the style, content, and genre of their films: up until the video revolution in the 1980s, national film industries explored political ideologies, avoiding sensational or melodramatic forms like those found in foreign commercial films popular at the time (Tcheuyap 2011, 5-7).²⁷⁰ However, because the GFIC was heavily underfunded, Ghana's major filmmakers produced only fourteen feature films between the late 1950s to the late 1970s (Garritano 2013, 54). As such, over ninety-five percent of films shown in Ghanaian cinema halls in the first few decades of Independence were foreign, including American Cowboy films, Hindi films, and Italian "Spaghetti" Westerns (Sakyi 1996, 10).²⁷¹

In West Africa, popular video industries such as Nollywood in Lagos, Kannywood in Kano, Kummawood in Kumasi, and Ghallywood in Accra began in the late 1970s and 1980s, following the subsequent flood of cheap recording technologies into the region, including personal video cameras, portable audio recorders, tape decks, and keyboards (Meyer 2015, 1). Accessible recording equipment opened a once elite field of filmmaking (such as that of the GFIC) to everyday filmmakers, many of whom had little training and were unaffiliated with intellectual institutions (Garritano 2013, 6 and 64-68). Some of Ghana's most well-known films emerged during this era of entrepreneurial filmmaking: Kwaw Ansah directed Ghana's first privately financed film, *Love Brewed in an African Pot* in 1980, and by 1985, *Zinabu* was released, being the first Ghanaian movie shot on video recording technology (McFeely 2015, 267; Meyer 2015, xii).

Despite the potential impact of foreign film genres on early local film production, there is little scholarship concerning foreign influence on Ghanaian filmmaking. This is a result of particular scholarly trajectories in West African film, outlined in more detail in Chapter Two. In other regional contexts, studies of foreign film adaptation have revealed a great deal about filmmakers' own aesthetic preferences, and those of their perceived audiences. For example, through various studies of

²⁷⁰ This is common in other regional contexts, such as in early postcolonial India, where the government concentrated on official patronage of modern, national art, centred in realism, discouraging the hybridity and sensationalism of commercial film (Vasudevan 2016, 4).

²⁷¹ This is similar in other regional contexts. For example, early Sri Lankan melodramas had been "castigated for decades...by local film critics and intelligentsia committed to the development of a "truly indigenous national cinema"" (Jayamanne 1992, 145).

Hollywood's influence on Indian cinema, scholars of Indian film detail specific ways in which a foreign film culture is negotiated to fit within perceived expectations of audiences in India. Many Hindi film directors "tease desirable elements out of Hollywood movies" (Nayar 1997, 75), focussing on the decisions, evaluations, and negotiations around the "Indianisation" of Hollywood films (Ganti 2008, 282). Hindi filmmakers "add emotion" to seemingly "dry" Hollywood films (*ibid*, 291), while Hollywood remakes "flop" when they are unable to navigate the differing moral codes of American and Indian films (Thomas 1995, 164). When remaking or borrowing plots, themes, or songs from foreign films, filmmakers operate as cultural mediators: foreign films are chosen carefully, and are adapted and restructured in terms of plot, characters, themes, and musical structures to suit the needs of a specific audience (Ganti 2008, 283).²⁷² In West Africa, the study of foreign film adaptation could provide similar insights into the values, interests, and perspectives of early filmmakers and their perceived audiences in various regional contexts, as foreign films will have been received and interpreted in different ways across the subcontinent.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, several scholars have explored Hindi film adaptation in Kannywood, the Northern Nigerian film industry (Adamu 2007a, 2007b and 2008; Krings 2015, 125-131; McCain 2013). Adamu and Krings highlight the musical impact of Hindi films on Hausa filmmaking, where ninety-eight per cent of Hausa video films have two to three diegetic songs, many based on Hindi song melodies with Hausa lyrics (Adamu 2013, 289 and 2008, 169; Krings 2005, 192). Krings shows the many ways in which Hindi films are altered and changed to fit within Hausa culture when making Hausa films (2015, 126). McCain notes how Hausa filmmakers used to draw on Bollywood choreographies with mixed-gender dancing for their films, however, following the rise of Sharia law in 1999, this is no longer considered appropriate (2013, 228).²⁷³ Other scholars have drawn links between early Yoruba filmmaking and Hindi films. For example, Onookome Okome has suggested that Yoruba filmmaker Ola Balogun's early work was influenced by Hindi films. He writes that Balogun's film *Ajani-Ogun* (name, 1975) is reputed to have "started an Indian song influence" in Nigerian filmmaking, including several diegetic songs

²⁷² Ethnomusicologists, including John Collins and Jesse Weaver Shipley, have similarly detailed such "critical redirection" of "alien parts" in key musical genres like Highlife and Hiplife, where musicians have creatively adapted foreign music within the Ghanaian context, forming some of the most widely known pop music styles in Ghana.

²⁷³ More recently, some researchers have explored the reception of various African film industries in circulation on the continent, such as Krings' (2013, 2015) study on the Tanzanian reception of Nollywood films.

throughout the film (1995, 96). For Okome, Balogun and his contemporaries took popular formats from foreign American and South Asian film cultures and creatively adjusted them to interest local audiences:

It is true that popular indigenous films borrow copiously from foreign film cultures...It is my opinion that this accommodating spirit is not uncritical. This eclectic spirit is a characteristic of most popular art forms operating in African towns and cities. There has been a critical redirection of these “alien parts” of popular indigenous film since *Ajani Ogun*...the accommodating spirit of popular indigenous film is also a critical spirit, revisiting itself through the close contact it maintains with its audience (*ibid*, 106).

Okome’s work explores foreign film reception in Yoruba filmmaking, noting how foreign influences are not necessarily hegemonic impositions, but rather are critically and selectively adapted to meet the needs of filmmakers and their perceived audiences in Western Nigeria.

The scholarship outlined here evidences the intricate ways in which foreign films are received and adapted in relation to political, economic, religious, and cultural norms in Northern and Western Nigeria. As I show throughout this chapter, Dagbani filmmakers similarly approach the process of adaptation through a critical lens, ensuring that films reflect the socio-cultural and religious perspectives and experiences of their viewers. I further make clear that adaptations of Hindi films are particular to each regional context; their adaptation in the Dagbani film industry reflect the particular socio-political, economic, and religious climate of Dagbon.

Parallels Between Hindi Cinema and Ghanaian Theatre

Above, Okome notes that the film *Ajani-Ogun* (1976) was influenced by the song segments of Hindi films (*ibid*, 96). However, film scholar Jonathan Haynes claims that the song-and-dance format of Yoruba popular travelling theatre influenced *Ajani-Ogun*, calling Balogun “the midwife of the transition from stage to film” (1999, 148). That different scholars attribute the style and form of *Ajani-Ogun* to both West African theatre traditions and post-colonial Hindi films hints at commonalities between the two forms. In this section, I show how the musical and narrative structures of Hindi films were already familiar amongst Ghanaian audiences attending concert party theatres in major urban centres. I suggest that these similarities contributed to the success of Hindi films in the region. In exploring these various similarities, I illuminate some of the

reasons why structures of Hindi cinema might have appealed to or resonated with early Dagbani filmmakers. Hindi films offered a filmic template for structures already popular with audiences in the region. In this sense, new mediated experiences resonated with audiences because they reflected and recapitulated cultural precursors (Barber 2018, 3).

One of the main similarities between Hindi films and travelling West African theatre is their use of melodrama. As a dramaturgical form, melodrama exists within a moral universe with clear ethical imperatives, that speaks to societies transitioning into capitalist forms of modernity (Brooks 1995, 14-17). As already detailed in Chapter Two, the melodramatic moral universe of postcolonial Hindi films reflected major changes occurring in Indian society at that time, reaffirming the importance of community, extended family, and pre-capitalist lives over worlds of urbanity, individuality, excessive consumption, and greed (Vasudevan 1995, 306-307; Sarkar 2009, 117-119). Such themes and perspectives were similarly espoused in Ghanaian and Nigerian urban theatre of that time. In the 1950s, Ghana's travelling concert party theatre tradition dealt with themes of inequality and the dangers of urban life, such as unemployment and poverty in the city, and the demise of the extended family (Barber, Collins, and Ricard 1997, 5; Collins 1997b, 89). Wole Ogundele describes Yoruba travelling theatre programmes of this period in melodramatic terms, as a world of opposites, including "superlative goodness and strength of the hero versus unspeakable depravity of the villain; extreme poverty and misery versus extreme wealth and power", framed by extravagant poetry, dance, music, and songs (2000, 101). Karin Barber, John Collins, and Alain Ricard write that West African postcolonial commercial entertainment was "not only made possible by the growth of the cities with their wage-earning populations, it was also very often *about* the city, articulating ambivalent responses to the attractions and dangers of urban life" (1997, 5). As Moradewun Adejunmobi (2010, 111) further suggests of the popularity of melodrama in Africa, it offered "a medium for rationalising the attractions of global modernity in the face of the extreme poverty and distress". That travelling theatres in the region were dealing with similar themes to Hindi films suggests that melodrama's moral universe had extended parlance with postcolonial communities undergoing similar transitions in disparate regions.

The parallels between West African urban theatre and Hindi films speaks to the flexibility, adaptability, and movement of melodramatic forms throughout the

nineteenth and twentieth century, where melodrama acts as a “living organism that mutates, surviving and evolving in the varied conditions in which it finds itself” (Hansen 2016, 27). In Europe, melodrama emerged out of the uniquely modern quest for moral clarity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, during an era of rapid social transformation (Brooks 1995, viii; Vasudevan 1995, 308; Vasudevan 2010, 105; Williams 2011).²⁷⁴ Kathryn Hansen historicises the arrival of melodrama in India, arriving via Anglo-Australian travelling theatres who brought Irish and English Victorian domestic melodramas to theatres across the country, from Calcutta to Bombay (2016, 3-6). Elements of these dramas were adapted in Parsi theatre, which in turn shaped the early Hindi cinema that travelled throughout the world in the mid-twentieth century (*ibid*). Parsi playwrights found in English and Irish Victorian domestic melodramas “correlates that made sense within the social and aesthetic horizons of...spectators” (*ibid*, 21). Dagbani filmmakers similarly draw on the melodramatic form of Hindi films as a frame; they adapt and tweak themes and stories found in Hindi films to reflect experiences of daily life in Tamale.

Melodrama is historically purposed to be clearly understandable to a broad audience. In fact, Victorian stage dramas developed out of pantomime, a wordless form that also included music, and encouraged performers to use gestures and facial expressions rather than spoken word, so that plays were comprehensible to the general population (Brooks 1995, x). Travelling Victorian melodramas were similarly comprehensible to audiences in India, including elite and everyday playgoers who spoke varied languages (Hansen 2016, 14). When Hindi films arrived in East and West Africa, they presented clear and often recurring themes that were easily accessible to non-Hindi speaking audiences. This was important in regions with extensive linguistic diversity, ensuring that plots and stories were easily understandable to broad populations (Adejunmobi 2010, 111). For example, Minou Fuglesang notes how audiences from various backgrounds in Lamu, Kenya engaged with Hindi films because of their “abundance of clear and simple codes and binary values which cannot easily be misinterpreted” (1994, 167). Similar examples can be found in postcolonial West Africa. For example, according to French cinema scholar Gilbert Ilboudo, who worked as a film professor in Ouagadougou in the early 1960s:

The audiences would see *Albela* (name, 1951) and *Mangala* (name, 1950) ten times without the charm fading! In Ouagadougou, cinema owners had to go through the routine of presenting *Albela* (1951)

²⁷⁴ Brooks locates the origins of melodrama in the French Revolution and its aftermath, a time in which traditional imperatives of truth and ethics were questioned (Brooks 1995, 14-16).

each week for three years... the African recognizes in what the Indian tells him a way of expressing relations with nature and the outside world: the defence of the widow and the orphan. This is how he is at ease in the poetic universe of Stayajit Rey's *Pather Panchali* (Song of the Little Road, 1955) and the life of the peasants in Bimal Roy's *Do Bigha Zamin* (Two Acres of Land, 1953)... They prefer a simple story, not devoid of poetics, but centred around collective subjects. They recognise the importance of music as a means of expression, a fundamental African taste rarely satisfied with the too individualistic films that we show in general.²⁷⁵

Ilboudo juxtaposes early postcolonial Hindi films with linear, European films, suggesting that both the themes of Hindi films (such as the demise of the extended family) as well as the expressivity of film songs, resonated with viewers in Burkina Faso.

Another clear commonality between Hindi films and West African travelling theatre is their use of diegetic songs. Music was central to West African travelling theatre that developed in coastal cities like Lagos and Accra during the 1920s (Barber, Collins, and Ricard 1997, 1).²⁷⁶ As Europeans had a long-established cultural presence in these coastal regions, early theatre shows included European songs and vaudeville sketches, and drew on music and dance styles including foxtrots and ragtime (*ibid*, 8; Cole 2001, 1). Following the rise of highlife recordings in the 1950s, concert theatre shifted from foxtrot and ragtime to the heavy use of highlife songs in plays (Cole 2001, 137). The 1950s saw a greater unification between storyline and music in Ghanaian concert party theatre, where actors relayed “the influence of unseen forces on everyday life” through song (*ibid*, 144-149).²⁷⁷ Cole defines 1950s concert theatre as “comic melodrama punctuated at emotional moments with well-known highlife tunes” (*ibid*; see also Collins 1997b, 84).²⁷⁸

Hindi films developed out of various nineteenth century urban theatre traditions in India, including Bengali *Jatra*, Marathi theatre, and Parsi theatre traditions, that were similar to West African travelling theatres in their use of song segments (Arnold 1991, 22, 42; Hansen 2016, 25). When Hindi cinema arrived to urban regions of India, audiences were familiar with the musical format and structures of Hindi cinema

²⁷⁵ Article was originally in French, and was translated by the author.

²⁷⁶ Akan storytelling (*anansesem*) has a long history of conveying stories through a combination of songs and dances that conclude with moral lessons (Cole 2001, 109; Collins 1997b, 85).

²⁷⁷ Of note here is musician, actor, and band leader Moses Kweku Oppong (otherwise known as Kakaiku), who revolutionised both the form and content of concert party shows in the mid-1950s (Cole 2001, 144).

²⁷⁸ Theatre shows were similarly popular in Mexico prior to the arrival of national cinema. See Ana M. López's writing on *teatro frívolo* and *género chico* (López 1993, 152).

because they mirrored the musical structure of the aforementioned urban theatre traditions throughout India (Ranade 1984, 69). Alison Arnold writes that in very early Hindi cinema, film producers and music directors used songs to “embellish and enhance the drama rather than to embellish the storyline”, though as Morcom suggests, songs became a significant form of narrative expression in subsequent decades (Arnold 1991, 58; Morcom 2007). In Hindi films, protagonists emote through song; singing reveals their values, feelings, and personal transformation to the audience, encouraging affective responses from viewers, who are in turn meant to relate or sympathise with the character’s struggles (Sarrazin 2008, 395-396). Film songs often convey intense feelings in larger-than-life ways, inspiring a sense of intimacy between viewer and performer, where “sung rather than spoken expression amplifies emotions and affect” (Morcom 2010, 149; 2007, 15; Ganti 2008, 294).²⁷⁹

When concert parties began to include highlife music in the 1950s, performers sang “sad highlife songs” in their shows during moments of sorrow, longing, or loss.²⁸⁰ Sad highlife songs were first recorded in the 1920s, and included songs about death and laments for the dead. This style has links to traditional funeral dirges as well as the funeral laments of very early palmwine guitar band music, that also dealt with melancholy themes.²⁸¹ Throughout the post-colonial period, sad songs became a common feature of concert party theatres. For example, in the 1973 concert party play *Awisia Yi Wo Ani* (Orphan Do Not Glance) by the Jaguar Jokers, the script includes eight “Sad Highlife Songs” that are differentiated from other highlife songs in the play (Collins 1997a). The play is about a man named Mr. Johnson who has three children, one of whom is from his deceased wife, and the other two are from his “domineering second wife” (Collins 1994, 63). Whenever Mr. Johnson is away, his second wife Comfort favours her own children over Mr. Johnson’s first child. At one point in the play, Comfort denies her stepson food while her children eat, at which point the stepson sings a sad highlife song about suffering. Collins reports that audiences at that time

²⁷⁹ Cantonese and Mandarin language musical cinema of the 1950s and 1960s also combined Shanghaiese singsong entertainment with Western motifs; it was geared towards immigrant populations, waning by the 1970s with the rise of a more affluent theatre-going population (Teo 1997, 29-60; also discussed in Gopal and Moorti 2008, 49-50).

²⁸⁰ Song segments have been used similarly in various other melodramatic forms, from Victorian stage dramas to twentieth century Mexican films. For example, in 1950s Greece, film directors included a similar song style in their films, where actors sang about their suffering as “a victim of fate and social cruelty”, full of “passion, emotional upheaval, sadness, melancholy, and desperation” (Karakitsou-Douge quoted in Eleftheriotis 2006, 105; Eleftheriotis 2010, 169). In post-revolution Mexican cinema, musical performances “reinvent” films with emotion, established through gesture, sentiment, and music (López 1993, 149-150).

²⁸¹ Personal communication with John Collins on 3 October 2018.

were so moved by the story that they threw coins and food onto the stage during the stepson's song, while jeering at the stepmother upon her return (*ibid*, 63-64).

Similarly in the mid-twentieth century concert party play *Egyankaba* (Orphan), a girl named Mansa lives with her father and wicked stepmother following her mother's death.²⁸² Cole notes that one of the most moving scenes in *Egyankaba* is when Mansa prepares food for her stepmother and stepsisters. When she comes to join them to eat, she is given their leftover food, covered in dirty handwashing water. Here, Mansa breaks out in a highlife lament, where she sings about the demise of her family. This song "tapped into the pathos of the scene, [with] the melancholy lyrics, melody, and harmonic structure blending...with the narrative" (Cole 2001, 146). Cole notes that "such a unity between songs and serious dramatic action had never before been seen on concert stages", causing many spectators to weep (*ibid*). The plight of orphans and housemaids is common to West African dramas: Collins suggests that the figure of the orphan in concert party theatres of the 1960s and 1970s describe "the acute loneliness, rootlessness, and loss of primary social relations encountered by many newcomers to the big city – a poetic way of expressing urban anomie" (1997b, 90). Cole similarly notes how Ghanaian plays about mistreated orphans and maidservants became popular in the 1950s and 1960s, a "paradigmatic post-colonial Ghanaian subject" depicting the breakdown of family structure (2001, 147).²⁸³

Just as sad songs in concert party theatre made audience members weep, Hindi film songs of the same period were known to be "achingly sad", with melancholy lyrics and lilting melodies (Sarkar 2009, 118). In India, sorrowful film songs worked as an affective labour for the national public in the years following partition, who felt "a deep sense of dislocation stemming from the impossibility of returning to one's own village or town" (*ibid*, 119-121).²⁸⁴ As discussed in Chapter Two, Hindi film songs received similar emotional response from audiences abroad. In Kenya, Fuglesang writes of film viewership as an "emotional act" where mainly female viewers express strong empathy towards the protagonists (1994, 173). In Tamale, I was often told that Hindi film songs "make you cry" and that "no other music gives you the emotion that Indian film songs

²⁸² In the Akan matrilineal custom, a child becomes an orphan when their mother dies.

²⁸³ Similar themes are found in more recent Akan films such as *Asem Mpe Nipa*, where the ghost of an orphan's deceased mother returns to assist her in navigating the schemes of her stepmother (Edmondson 2011, 102).

²⁸⁴ As Sarkar suggests, partition influenced the writing of some of the industry's key players, including the Kapoors, the Chopras, the Anands, Balraj Sahni, Bimal Roy, and Ramanand Sagar.

do”.²⁸⁵ Just as audiences empathised with protagonists in concert party theatre plays, cinema audiences in Ghana similarly empathised with the Hindi film character on screen, relating to their own struggles of poverty and social change in a postcolonial context.²⁸⁶ As I show below, Dagbani films similarly feature songs that are invested with emotion, featured in moments of distress or sorrow. To create these songs, Dagbani film song composers choose specific Hindi film song melodies to base their film songs on, gravitating towards Hindi film songs with lilting melodies and a sombre tone, that work to effectively relay the protagonist’s sorrow to Dagbamba audiences.

In this section, I have explored the many resonances between Ghanaian travelling theatre and Hindi film traditions of the post-colonial period, as they have both been influential for many Dagbani filmmakers, actors, and singers. It is important to note that the majority of concert party plays in Ghana were written in Akan languages and thus were generally targeted at Southern communities.²⁸⁷ Concert party theatre groups including the Axim Trio did travel North beginning in the 1930s, and the genre was influential on the development of some musical genres in Tamale, including Simpa (Cole 2001, 98; Collins 1994, 306 and 613). Southern concert parties continued to travel to Tamale in the 1980s, and these shows influenced some early drama groups in the city, up until the chieftaincy crisis of 2002 when nightly curfews ceased all late-night entertainment in town (Yamusah 2013, 88). Considering that most concert party theatres travelled through Tamale, it is likely that Tamale viewers were more exposed to Hindi films as a melodramatic form between the 1960s and the 1980s, when films played several times a week in the centre of town. As will become clear in the following exploration of Dagbani film making in Tamale, the melodramatic form of Hindi films, as well as their diegetic song segments, were drawn upon and adapted to fit within the context of filmmaking beginning in the 1990s.

The Dagbani Film Industry

The Dagbani film industry began in Tamale in the mid-1980s. At that time, actors from local drama groups began experimenting with newly arriving video recording technologies. Early films combined the work of local drama groups with the narrative

²⁸⁵ Interview with filmmaker A in Tamale on 9 July, 2016.

²⁸⁶ Recently, Mexican *telenovas* like *Simply Maria* and Hindi-language TV serials like *KumKum Bhagya* have become popular in Tamale, to the point that some of the stars of *KumKum Bhagya* toured Accra, Kumasi, and Tamale in November 2017. These TV serials grapple with similar struggles as those found in early Hindi films and in contemporary Dagbani films.

²⁸⁷ John Collins’ presentation at the International Association for Audio-Visual and Sound Archives in Accra, Ghana, 2 October 2018.

and musical structures and techniques of Hindi films, that were widely available in Tamale's cinema halls at that time. Early on, filmmakers invited musicians to make music for their films. For example, in the late 1980s, Albela (the street musician previously discussed in Chapter Four) began receiving requests to write songs for Dagbani films.²⁸⁸ In a conversation with a filmmaker who was active at that time, he explained how he made his first film:

We were looking up to the Indian films, the ones we watched, we tried to put that into Dagbani and also act it. So, we weren't considering what was happening in [Indian] society but what they had from their movies. When we were watching Indian films – for instance, I didn't go to school, so I wouldn't be able to tell the title of the film, so we would only look at the film and then manufacture a title for our own. Then, we would call Albela. Albela was also watching Indian films. So he would look for the perfect song for our film and he would sing. Albela would not act, he was only going to sing the song for our movie. Somebody would mime his song in our film.²⁸⁹

From the earliest years of filmmaking in Tamale, structures of music production common to Hindi films were employed to suit the creative direction of Dagbani films and film music, including the role of the playback singer and diegetic song-segments. Despite their efforts, these filmmakers struggled to make their films successful in the early years, due to the high cost of filmmaking and the difficulty in accessing musical recording technologies. At that time, new recording technologies were only accessible through foreigners, brought on request by German workers, Catholic priests, and British construction workers.²⁹⁰

The first full-length Dagbani film feature, *Nabaala* (name), was released in Tamale in 1989, though it was not until 1993 that a filmmaker produced a full-length feature film with song-segments, following the rise of recordings technicians and studios in the North. The earliest full length film to use diegetic singing was the 1993 film *Suhiri Yela* (Matters of the Heart), produced by Afa Digital. *Suhiri Yela* is a remake of an English language Southern Ghanaian film, *Matters of the Heart* (1993), produced by Great Idikoko Venture.²⁹¹ *Matters of the Heart* bears striking resemblance

²⁸⁸ This is discussed in more depth in Chapter Four. Considering that Albela was already using Hindi film song melodies to tell stories about everyday life in Tamale at least a decade before the arrival of video recording equipment, it is interesting to think about how his own musical style and performance practice informed the development of music as part of the early Dagbani film industry.

²⁸⁹ Interview with an older filmmaker in Tamale on 5 November 2016.

²⁹⁰ Conversation with Abubakari Sadiq in Tamale on 9 September 2016; Conversation with Abdul-Kadir Alidu in Tamale on 16 September 2016.

²⁹¹ Similarly in the Hausa film industry, Adamu (2013, 287) notes how Hausa filmmakers appropriate and rework Southern Nigerian films to make them appealing to Muslim audiences in Northern Nigeria.

to the plot of the 1982 Hindi film *Yeh Vaada Raha*, a melodramatic story of lovers separated by class. In the Southern Ghanaian film, Nicho falls in love with Sakina, and brings her to meet his mother in order to marry her. However, Nicho's mother rejects Sakina because she has tribal marks and is from a poor family. Nicho chases after Sakina to convince her of his love, and as anthropologist James Gibbs describes: "they sing a mawkish love song in a public park...[that] seems to be a sop to the expectations of an audience brought up on a diet of Indian films" (2000, 320). Gibbs further recalls that the Accra-based film was a "mixture of melodrama, Indian movie, and concert party", especially with reference to the well-known song "Sakina" (*ibid*, 319).

Though some early Southern films like *Matters of the Heart* drew on the format of Hindi films, they form part of the "first wave" of Southern Ghanaian video making from the mid-1980s to early 1990s, where diegetic song-segments were common (Garritano 2013, 103-105). By the late 1990s, Southern Ghana experienced a second wave of video makers who focussed on formulas that worked to "contain the melodramatic excess" while growing increasingly averse to sensationalism and spectacle (*ibid*). Film directors increasingly preferred non-diegetic film music, moving away from "a more melodramatic and less realist use of music" that was once employed to "heighten the viewer's emotional response" (*ibid*, 104). Second-wave Southern videos shifted from stories of just and moral worlds to fantasies of consumption and wealth, set in glamorous modern cities, replete with office buildings, gated communities, and Mercedes Benzes (Meyer 2015, 96-98). The move away from melodramatic modes in Southern Ghanaian films of the mid-1990s and 2000s reflects major changes following democratisation in 1994 and the subsequent economic transition into neo-liberalism, as Southern youth were over-saturated with the global political economy of consumption (*ibid*, 96). For filmmakers in Accra, melodramatic song-segments depicting the vulnerability of rural poverty were becoming increasingly outdated.

Because of its more remote location, and its status as a secondary city, Tamale experienced less governmental investment in its economy and infrastructure than other major urban centres like Kumasi or Accra during the 1990s. Lack of access to strong internet, inconsistent electricity and water supplies, the increase in Southern migrant labour, and the violent conflicts of 1994 and 2002 set a starkly different tone for filmmaking in Tamale. In other words, the themes that came out of the "development doctrine" in post-democratisation Accra did not reflect the experiences of those living

in Tamale. Instead, melodramatic formats remained relevant. As such, Dagbani filmmakers drew on pre-1990 Hindi film plots and song segments precisely because they dealt with themes and issues relevant to Dagbamba viewers in Tamale. As one of Tamale's early filmmakers explained to me:

With how things were going back then, even til date, the Indian culture is much more like the culture here in the Northern region. We have a lot of things in common. So, if you pick something from their culture and you repeat it here, the people don't even think you've picked it from somewhere. It fits perfectly with our own culture. So, picking stories and songs from there has a message here in the Northern region itself – people feel it's easier to relate to it here, that's why it's easy to pick stories and songs from Indian movies than any other place.²⁹²

Hindi films offered a platform for which filmmakers and playback singers could selectively draw from when creating their own movies, particularly as the themes and stories of postcolonial Hindi films reflect lived experiences in Tamale.

Following the success of Afa Digital's 1993 film *Suhiri Yela*, other Dagbani filmmakers began producing their own diegetic song segments. For example, one of Tamale's earlier filmmakers recalled that after making her first film in 1994, she decided to put music in her second film. She explains: "as of that time, you wouldn't have a complete movie story without a song to accompany the movie and tell the story in a different way, so I decided to put music in my second movie".²⁹³ During this time, nearly all locally produced audio cassettes and CDs circulating in Tamale were compilations of songs from Dagbani films (Yamusah 2013, 79). Similar to the Hindi film industry, Dagbani film songs functioned as additional advertising for the film (*ibid*; Ganti 2008, 295). For example, the filmmaker quoted above recalled re-releasing her own film songs on cassette in the mid-1990s: "when the movie came out with a song in it, it made a hit. So I said, ok, if the song had an impact in the movie, why not release the song in a different way, and see how it goes?"²⁹⁴ Perhaps the biggest "hit" from this era was filmmaker and playback singer Ahmed Adam's song "Gurgbaya", an "Indian style" song composed in 1995 for his major feature film *Maina* (name).²⁹⁵ Soon after the release of the film, Adam and film director Nana Gazor realised the potential

²⁹² Interview with filmmaker B on 6 November 2016.

²⁹³ *Ibid*.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid*.

²⁹⁵ Conversation with Ahmed Adam in Tamale on 6 November 2015.

of the song, and re-released it as part of an album in 1997. According to Gazor, the album was “equally popular in its own right, and could be heard all over Tamale”.²⁹⁶ The song is still popular in Tamale today, heard in taxis, on the radio, and in the central market. By the late 1990s, filmmakers began to draw on popular Hindi film song melodies to use in their own film songs, setting Dagbani lyrics to these familiar tunes. Such parodied songs are referred to in Tamale as “Indian copyrights”. The first widely available Dagbani film song to do so was “Ayizang Amang Zaa N-ti Kpenglana Naawuni” (If You Give All of Yourself to God), which was based on the melody of the Hindi film song “Awara Pagal Diwara” (Wayward, Crazy, Insane) from the Hindi film *Lahoo Ke Do Rang* (Blood has Two Colours, 1997).²⁹⁷

From the late 1990s, Dagbani film songs soundtracks were heard not only in the Dagbani movies themselves at video centres, but also via the radio, in taxis, in people’s homes on cassette and CD players, and more recently on people’s mobile phones. From the 2000s onwards, Dagbani filmmakers have released compilation DVD albums, that string together the music scenes from films. Rather than having to produce music videos, Dagbani artists conveniently use scenes already produced for their films in these video albums. Dagbani video compilation albums fit within contemporary music economies throughout the continent, where there is an increasing expectation to produce music video albums. As Krings suggests, recorded music is “no longer simply heard but rather heard and watched” (Krings 2015, 234). More easily accessible and widespread than other commodity forms, the rise of digital music saw the scattering of music “from any point of creation and departure any number of points of destination” (Born 2005, 25).

Commissioning a Song for *N’Zim* (My Blood, 2016)

By the early 2000s, there was a well-established group of singers in Tamale who worked in the film industry. Filmmakers commissioned these singers to compose the music and write the lyrics for these songs, as well as record the vocal tracks in the studio. During 2016, I spent time with one of the most well-known playback singers in Tamale, who is highly sought after in the Dagbani film industry. Like others who work in the film industry, she spends most days at her DVD shop in town, selling Dagbani

²⁹⁶ Conversation with music producer on 21 September 2016 in Accra and conversation with Ahmed Adam on 16 November 2016 in Tamale.

²⁹⁷ The song was originally in a Dagbani film, and later placed inside Adam’s second 1998 song compilation album, as discussed in a conversation with Ahmed Adam in Tamale on 16 November 2016.

films and local music albums.²⁹⁸ Her shop also doubles as an office, where filmmakers come to commission new songs for their upcoming films.



Figure 41 Video Shop in Central Tamale

Caption: A playback singer's DVD shop in town. Photo taken on 19 August 2016.

I began visiting this particular playback singer's shop quite regularly during my trip to Tamale in 2016, spending time with her, watching movies, and learning more about her music. One morning while I was visiting the shop, a filmmaker arrived to commission a song for his new film, *N'Zim* (My Blood, 2016). The film is about a poor plumber who leaves his impoverished home to work in a different village on a construction project. There, the man falls in love with a woman from that village. As his job contract draws to a close, he is forced to move away to the city to find better work. In the city, he becomes a successful businessman, eventually marrying a wealthy, childless, urban woman. Over twenty years after he arrived in the city, he is involved in a car accident, and learns in the hospital he has a rare blood type. His housemaid, Aisha, surprisingly shares his blood type, and donates her blood to save his life. This makes his urban wife jealous and she burns the maid's hands with an iron in an effort to banish the maid from the house. The maid runs back to her rural home in the village, crying and limping with a burnt hand and broken plastic *chale wote* sandal.²⁹⁹ When the recovered businessman is driving home from the hospital, he sees the maid and chases after her. He finally catches up with her in the village, only to realise that he is

²⁹⁸ These shops are all positioned in the centre of town, close to the taxi rank and central market.

²⁹⁹ The flip flop she wears is known in Ghana as "Chale Wote", a kind of inexpensive and everyday footwear.

at his former lover's home where he had worked in construction decades prior. His housemaid is actually his daughter, as unknown to him, his ex-lover had become pregnant just before he moved to the city (explaining his shared blood type with the maid). The song being commissioned is from the perspective of the daughter/maid, as she runs back to the village, praying to God to alleviate her poverty. Throughout the scene she cries, limping through the dusty streets back home.



Figure 42 *N'Zim* (My Blood, 2016) DVD cover

In most Dagbani melodramas, the moral universe is negotiated in the domestic sphere, often exploring the demise of extended family ties. For example, in *N'Zim*, this is experienced both through the lens of the father, who is separated from his lover through his sojourn to the city, but also by Aisha, who struggles to live alongside her “boss’s” evil and selfish wife (who turns out to be her stepmother). Tensions rise between the protagonist who sojourns to the city only to become a symbol of the orphaned housemaid, a trope discussed earlier in the chapter. In *N'Zim*, Aisha has to do the chores of her boss’s childless urban wife, who is in fact her stepmother. As the orphan figure’s foil, the urban stepmother’s individualistic, jealous, and wealth-driven character transgresses the moral ideals of kinship and maternal support (Thomas 1995,

171).³⁰⁰ At the end of *N'Zim*, the urban wife, who remains jealous of the housemaid, flies to Dubai on a shopping spree and is killed in a plane crash on her return home. The death of the urban wife plays into the melodramatic genre in several ways: first, because the stepmother is childless, she counters the figure of the mother, who usually defines the “field of good” in melodramatic films (*ibid*, 160). Second, the elimination of the urban wife makes room for a united family unit in the village, resolving the familial dysfunction brought upon by urban life. Third, the death of the urban wife underscores the consequences of one’s individuality, worldliness, and wealth. This is a clear contrast to the village mother who has sacrificed and lived in poverty throughout her lover’s twenty-year absence in order to maintain the possibility of a family reunion.

In other regional melodramas, the family unit similarly becomes a microcosm for society, and significant aspects of social life are reflected, debated, and negotiated between father, mother, and child (Brooks 1995; Vasudevan 1995, 310). In Sri Lankan melodramas, the mother is typically defined in the field of good (traditional, rural, poor, and moral) in opposition to the “bad” villain (who is urban, rich, and Westernised) (Jayamanne 1992, 150). Such a moral universe is bound up in discourses of traditionalism and ideas about kinship and sexuality (Thomas 1995, 160). The rural-urban tension is integrally linked to the familial divide: one’s journey from country to city represents a “disorienting transition from a tradition-bound, purer way of life to the alluring but potentially dangerous space of modernity” (Dass 2012, 628).³⁰¹ Women’s travel into the city in particular reflects the demise of traditional economies and familial structures, as they can no longer depend on marriage for economic survival (Jayamanne 1992, 150). This dynamic is clearly evidenced in *N'Zim*, where Aisha’s passage to the city is fraught with danger and economic uncertainties, working long hours for minimal pay far away from her family.

After describing the plot of his film, the filmmaker for *N'Zim* requested the playback singer to create a song with a similar message. Though the film director initially requested the playback singer to use a certain melody for his film song, she overlooked this request once the filmmaker left her shop, as she knew one a melody that sounded “more sorrowful”.³⁰² While Dagbani film directors provide the content of

³⁰⁰ As Collins notes of concert party theatre, independent, Western-educated, and city-oriented women are often antagonised for their rejection of polygyny and their adoption of family planning, a theme exemplified in plays such as *The End of Our Greedy Women* (1997b, 88).

³⁰¹ Mexican melodramas also explore clashes between old (feudal) values and modern (industrialised, urban) life (López 1993, 153).

³⁰² Conversation with playback singer B in Tamale on 19 August 2016.

songs that playback singers write lyrics for, playback singers are given freedom to choose the melody. Playback singers are also responsible for making sure that the content of the Dagbani song fits the overall theme of the film. As one of Tamale's more well-known playback singers explained: "if the director of the film has a song for you, it has to follow the story that you are doing...if we are doing a love song, and the Indian film has a [religious] song, I turn it to a love song."³⁰³ In this sense, Tamale's playback singers have a great deal of creative control in their song writing process. The collaborative process for commissioning a song for Dagbani films echoes that of film music production in the Hindi film industry. As Anna Morcom notes, Hindi film songs are created by a music director in conversation with the film director, who maintains a large role in the creation and direction of film songs (2007, 29-30). However, unlike the structure of Hindi film song compositions in India, where the roles of music director and playback singer are separate, playback singers in Tamale are expected to compose the song, write the Dagbani lyrics, and sing in the studio.

After the director left, she got to work, brainstorming the right Hindi film song melody to use for this newly commissioned song. She brought out a pirated DVD compilation titled "Greatest Bollywood Hits of the 1970s" and flicked through music videos until finding the melody she desired: "Main Shayar to Nahin", from the 1973 Hindi film *Bobby*. The Hindi film song lyrics, subtitled in English at the bottom of the screen, depict a song of romantic longing between Raj Nath (Rishi Kapoor) and Bobby Braganza (Dimple Kapadia), a musical culmination of larger themes of class and forbidden love woven throughout the film. She explained to me this song was suitable for its sorrowful qualities, as it fit the context of the Dagbani film song in which Aisha pleads with God to alleviate her struggles.³⁰⁴ "Main Shayar To Nahin" is an interesting choice for a Dagbani film song about a lost connection with God in times of vulnerability, as the original song similarly details romantic loss.

³⁰³ Interview with playback singer B in Tamale on 2 November 2016.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

With the importance of the song style and content in mind, the playback singer began to change the lyrics of lost love found in “Main Shayar to Nahin” to a song pleading with God for support. In her shop, she engaged in a process of playing, pausing, rewinding, and replaying the Hindi music video for over two hours, paying attention to the melody while writing Dagbani lyrics that would fit, line by line. To smoothly transition from Hindi to Dagbani, she first wrote the Hindi lyrics phonetically for reference to prosody, so that the newly composed Dagbani lyrics “fit well” within the original melody. She also sought to “capture the melody well” by recreating a similar refrain-verse structure to that of the original song. When she finished writing, she sang her film song in its entirety in Dagbani, titled “Nduma nyeni ka n suhira” (God, you’re the one I’m pleading with), that translates as follows:

N duuma nyeni ka n-suhira	God, you’re the one I’m pleading with
Nyeni n-nye Duni n-namma	You’re the one who created me
A ko ka n-mi	You’re the only one I know,
N Kumdi n-niDda n-duuma	The only one I cry to
Nyeni n-mi din n-Dmanima	You’re the one who knows what is best for me
Fara n tahili ka n-diri wahala	Poverty is the cause of my suffering,
Bo n-lee tabili ka a niDma nandana?	God why did you create me a poor person?
Shali ni diri D) n-duuma,	So that one day I’ll also eat to my satisfaction,
Nyeni n-mi din simsim	God, please grant me my wishes in this world
N duma nyeni ka n-suhira	God, you’re the one I’m pleading with

In this scene, Aisha (the protagonist, daughter, and maid) dreams of a more stable life while physically limping with a burnt hand and a broken sandal, homeless in the city and resolved to return to her mother in the village. The central theme – a desire for a closer connection to God in times of need – is not unique to this film song, as nearly all popular music commissioned for films in Tamale focus on one’s need for God, faith, and piety, a reflection of Islam’s significance in Tamale. As Peter Brooks discusses, European melodramas similarly emerged out of a post-sacred era, following the fall of the church with the rise of democracy; melodramas of this period asserted the need for a version of the sacred, as deviating from religious life led to an unethical and morally dubious world (Brooks 1995, 15-16). These anxieties are similarly reflected in the majority of Dagbani film songs, where a relationship with God is essential in re-establishing the film’s moral universe.

When choosing a melody for their film song, playback singers mainly rely on CDs and DVDs of older Hindi film soundtracks that circulate in Tamale's central market. Playback singers gravitate towards Hindi film songs about longing, loss, and separation. These are typically solo performances rather than large scale choreographed song-and-dance sequences. The "pairing down" of instruments and vocals typical of songs of longing creates "an up-close listening experience" also common amongst Anglo-American pop ballads (Dibben 2014, 119-120; Dibben 2013, 113). This is certainly true of "Nduma nyeni ka n suhira" (see Audio-Visual Example 15). Very few Dagbani film songs include the more light-hearted Bollywood group singing or dancing.³⁰⁵ In fact, one of Tamale's main playback singers differentiated between "Indian songs that have song and dance" and "emotional songs that make you cry" with most Dagbani film songs gravitating towards the latter.³⁰⁶

As many Dagbani film songs detail a longing for God, playback singers use Hindi film song melodies detailing lost love and longing in order to make a metaphoric analogy between romantic and divine love. Hindi songs detailing lost love are heard as intensely emotional by listeners in Tamale. For example, one playback singer spoke of Hindi film songs as songs that "make us feel things – we don't know the meaning in Hindi but the songs make us feel emotion."³⁰⁷ Another filmmaker similarly explained that "you don't need to understand the words to feel the melody – you can feel it".³⁰⁸ These melodies are thus easily changed to songs about longing for God. Similar analogies are found in popular music in India. Manuel suggests that much of traditional and modern Hindu and Indo-Muslim poetry and song is deliberately ambiguous in this sense, leaving it up to the listener to interpret the romantic or devotional nature of a song (1993, 106). In a similar vein, Qureshi writes how Sufi audiences in her research go into a state of *hal* (mystical ecstasy) in the cinema when hearing a romantic film song (Qureshi 1992, 119). In West African Sufi genres, such as *bandiri* music from Northern Nigeria, themes of secular love are similarly used to convey the emotions of religious and devotional love for the Prophet or Allah (Buba 1999, 39; Larkin 2004a, 110).

³⁰⁵ This is different from adaptations of Hindi films in Hausa videos: Hausa filmmakers tend to use popular choreographed song and dance segments from Hindi films (Adamu 2008, 154; Krings 2015, 125-131).

³⁰⁶ Conversation with playback singer A in Tamale on 16 January 2018.

³⁰⁷ Conversation with playback singer A in Tamale on 26 December 2017.

³⁰⁸ Conversation with filmmaker C in Tamale on 16 January 2018.

Up until the past few years with the onset of high speed internet, newer Bollywood films have not been accessible in the region, and it has been only older Hindi film songs that circulate via DVDs and CDs in the market. However, with the coming of high-speed internet, some filmmakers are now accessing and integrating stories and melodies from the newest Bollywood films.³⁰⁹ The genre of film does not seem to matter (they borrow melodies from Indian horror films, thrillers, and romantic dramas), as long as the songs are solemn, slow, and serious, eliciting a similarly intense and sorrowful emotion from listeners.³¹⁰ One example of this is the borrowing of the film song melody from “Sanam Ree” (2016) for the Dagbani song “Nagumsi” in the 2018 film *ZimSim*, which I discuss in more depth later in this chapter. Other examples include the 2009 Dagbani film song “Chanti Wuni” (Leave it to God), that draws on the slow and solemn Bollywood film song “Agar Tum Mil Jao” (If I had you) from the 2005 Hindi thriller *Zeher*. The 2004 Hindi romantic thriller *Aetbaar* (Trust), was remade in its entirety in the recent Dagbani film *Yeda* (Trust), and draws on the original Hindi film’s solemn and sorrowful songs, such as “Tum Mujhe Bas Yun Hi” (You Miss Me) and “Chhodo Chhodo” (Leave, Leave). The recent Dagbani film *Musilim* (name) uses the sorrowful melodies of the 2012 film *Raaz 3*, such as “Deewana Kar Raha Hai” (Your Love is Making Me Mad). Perhaps the most popular example is the melody for “Tum Hi Ho” (You are the One) from *Aashiqui 2* (2013), which has been adapted for several recent Dagbani film songs.

A few weeks after the commissioning of “Nduma nyeni ka n suhira”, I arrived at a studio for the recording of the song. Both playback singer and sound engineer began to listen to the original version of “Main Shayar to Nahin”, noting the instrumental accompaniment and their rhythms. The sound engineer employed both a keyboard and synthesizer to replicate various instruments, created through newly programmed and easily downloadable synthesizer applications suitable for keyboards. The playback singer also used the microphone to her advantage, singing closely to the microphone to make her vocal wavering and breathiness audible to listeners. Her voice had been enhanced by additional effects of auto-tune, sonically reproducing a sense of longing through studio equipment. Once the song was recorded, she called in the director, who had been sitting outside the studio. Together, the film director and

³⁰⁹ While filmmakers are accessing these films through the internet, new Bollywood songs are still fairly inaccessible, only available to those who can afford newer mobile phones or laptops and the accompanying data required to download films.

³¹⁰ Tamale’s wider public does not have access to these films yet, and as such the plots and songs appear to be new and original for viewers.

playback singer listened to the song while the sound engineer left the room. The filmmaker commissioning the song liked it, saying that the song “captured the feeling and overall theme of the movie” rather than “details of the scene itself.”³¹¹ Once approved by the film director, the recording was burned to CD and passed along to the actress who would learn to lip-sync the song in the film. Several weeks later, the director, videographers, and actress collected at a nearby site to film the scene. Dressed in costume, she lip-synced along to an accompanying MP3 radio speaker playing the playback singer’s recording, as videographers filmed the scene from multiple angles outside the city. For hours, the actor playing Aisha performed a stream of tears, enacting the sense of desperation and audible reference to emotion found in “Nduma nyeni ka n suhira.”

The Purpose of the Playback Singer

The role of the playback singer in Dagbani films developed out of a need for skilled singers whose performances matched the emotional intensity of the film character. Singers needed strong control of the voice, with an ability to sing with vibrato and breathiness. In Hindi cinema, the role of the playback singer similarly developed out of a need for a consistent standard of singing: the earliest films were sung by actors and actresses, who were untrained and unable to express themselves convincingly in a song (Arnold 1991, 48-49). In contrast, musicians trained in classical and light-classical vocal music could tackle more difficult musical performances, such as songs with melodic ornamentation and more rhythmic freedom (*ibid*). By the late 1940s, nearly all Hindi films were sung by playback singers, introducing a more consistent standard of singing into the industry (*ibid*).

The studio recording for “Nduma nyeni ka n suhira” reveals the qualities required of Dagbani film playback singers. Considering that Aisha is crying and running home in the scene, the playback singer had to create the impression that she was also crying and out of breath in her song. She sang the song with a constricted, nasal timbre, and noticeable vibrato, known in Tamale as “shaking the voice”. Through vibrato, she sonically references Aisha’s tears. In Christine Reiko Yano’s research on Japanese Enka music (a form of sentimental ballad music), she similarly finds that emotion is developed through vocal aesthetic. Rather than a smooth, seamless vocal approach, Enka performers employ *yuri* (a distinctive “swinging” of the voice that is

³¹¹ Conversation with filmmaker C on 22 August 2016.

similar to vibrato but slower and broader) as “an affective tool for building and resolving tension and for expression of the primal emotions associated with a quavering voice, a tremulous sigh, or a racking sob” (Yano 2002, 112). As Yano puts it, “*yuri* gives aural expression to the tears of Enka” (*ibid*). A similar instance is found in Northern Ewe funeral crying songs (*avihawo*) from Northern Ghana and Togo, where singers explore the range between speech and song, incorporating intonation of cries, sobs, and weeping in their performance (Agawu 2016, 89). Of the *avihawo* vocal performance, Agawu writes: “No other instrument allows performers to...link the worlds of words and concepts with those of sound and sonority so felicitously” (*ibid*). In the Dagbani film industry, musicians and filmmakers alike note how one’s ability to “shake the voice” is fundamental in both sonically referencing the character’s emotional state, but also provoking tears from audience members.

The vocal approach of Dagbani film singers was not immediately apparent to me during fieldwork. It wasn’t until I began to try to sing a Dagbani film song myself that I was told (and thus learned) what *not* to do as a playback singer, and in turn, what characteristics and qualities are expected of Tamale’s playback singers. In 2018, the director for a new film *ZimSim* (Darkness) invited me to sing his new film song “Nagumsi” (see Audio-Visual Example 16). “Nagumsi” is based on the melody of “Sanam Ree”, from a 2016 film of the same title, that the filmmaker’s wife originally heard on the new Indian television series *Kumkum Bhagya*. I was initially given the film song and the Dagbani lyrics, and had several weeks to learn the song. When it was time for me to record “Nagumsi” in the studio, I arrived having learned the song in its entirety. However, after my first take, I was quickly reminded by the filmmaker and sound engineer that the most important vocal quality a Dagbani playback singer can have is their ability to “shake the voice”, a quality mentioned by playback singers many times throughout my fieldwork. Shaking the voice requires a pulsating change in pitch, akin to vibrato in Western classical vocal performance. While in the studio, the filmmaker stopped me throughout the recording process to correct my vocals, complaining that my voice was “too straight forward”.³¹² He told me that in order to shake my voice, I needed to press my tongue to the roof of my mouth while singing.³¹³

³¹² During her ethnographic research on Skyrian songs in Greece, Angela Glaros also engaged in vocal performance as participant observation. She found that through her performances, criticisms from audiences gave a sense of Skyirans’ aesthetic categories and views on effective vocal performance (Glaros 2011, 177).

³¹³ Conversation with filmmaker A on in Tamale on 11 November 2015. Kofi Agawu describes similar singing styles as nasalised sounds in other West African contexts, which he suggests are produced through the strategic constriction of the vocal chords (Agawu 2016, 88).

At the end of my recording session, he expressed doubt about my ability to provoke emotion:

Filmmaker A: I can tell you are not a musician.

Katie: Really? How can you tell?

Filmmaker A: Because there is no feeling there!

Katie: How do you get feeling in your music?

Filmmaker A: Through shaking your voice, you need to have emotion in your voice!

The playback singer continued to lament how much of the vocal approach of American (and more broadly Western) popular music is similarly “straight” like my own singing, and ultimately void of emotion.³¹⁴ Interestingly, he mentioned that unlike Western pop music, Indian playback singers shake their voice “in a controlled way” just as Dagbani playback singers do.³¹⁵ In a similar vein, my vocals differed from his in terms of vocal sliding: while he could slide between notes (akin to *portamento*), I instinctively avoided jumping/sliding between notes, instead inserting additional notes between the slide, aligning each additional passing note to the rhythm of “Nagumsi”. For example, in the chorus, I sing the downward fall of “bε” in the line “Karim mi, Suhumbε” by matching each melodic decline with an accompanying rhythmic change. In the context of the Dagbani film industry, my “straight forward” vocal approach is read as stripping the song of its sonic sense of urgency, vulnerability, and breathlessness. The Dagbani playback singers I spoke with purposefully perform “lack of control” to mirror the lack of control felt by their respective film characters, whose lives are governed by forces beyond their control.

When DJ Jace Clayton writes of the popularity of Whitney Houston’s “I Will Always Love You” amongst Maghrebi listeners, he suggests that Houston’s vocal approach is imperative to its sense of “emotional overflow” experienced by listeners, especially in terms of the melisma of the extended words *I* and *you* (Clayton 2016, 42-45). He furthermore suggests that for Maghrebi listeners, melismatic vocal styles commonly found in American popular ballads as well as the call to prayer and Qur’anic recitations index emotional intimacy and vulnerability, where vocal approach pushes

³¹⁴ Conversation with filmmaker A on 13 January 2018.

³¹⁵ I see similarities between filmmaker A’s description of Hindi playback singers’ controlled shaking and Nicola Dibben’s description of Adele’s vibrato nearing the end of the hit ballad “Someone Like You”, which she describes as an “artful loss of control” (Dibben 2014, 122).

beyond the context of language (Clayton 2016, 44-45). When applied to the example of Hindi film songs in Tamale, it seems that Indian playback singers' vocal styles were similarly read as emotionally intense.

Part of “shaking the voice” is playing with rhythmic anticipation in order to intimate breathlessness. This is true in both film song examples discussed in this thesis, which have long pauses that work to build expectation and anticipation. For example, in “Main Shayer to Nahin”, there are significant pauses between “main shayar” “to” and “nahin”, just as there is a noticeable pause between “Sanam Ree” and the second “Sanam Ree” in the 2016 film song chorus. The use of lengthy pauses within a phrase mirrors the delayed resolution commonly found in songs of longing. In the case of Enka, for example, Yano notes that:

An expressive element that can be heard in every *Enka* performance is *rubato*, the rhythmic manipulation of the melody...In *Enka*, rubato is most often achieved through a vocal lag within, rather than between, phrases. A singer may drag a melody throughout a phrase yet preserve the rhythmic unit of the phrases (Yano 2002, 111).

In Dagbani film songs, vocal lags and breaks are not only useful in creating anticipation but also important places to take audible breaths. Reflecting back on my experiences learning “Nagumsi” and later recording it in the studio, I unconsciously altered the original breath placement for the song in my rendition. For example, I sing through the line “Nagumsi, Nagumsi” in the chorus, whereas when the filmmaker demonstrated how the song *should* sound, he inserted audible breaths (“Nagumsi *breath* Nagumsi”) in his rendition.

In Tamale, playback singers perform breathiness purposefully, making the character's breathlessness and desperation “real” to the listener. Like Enka singers, playback singers “gasp during singing, especially as they approach or reach a musical climax. The gasp conveys a feeling of breathlessness, a build-up of emotional intensity” (Yano 2002, 113). Often, listeners interpret such musical qualities as “being affected by the actual attitude of the performer” (Turino 1999, 238). Drawing on Peircean semiotics, Turino suggests that audiences often experience musical performances as *dicent-indices*, where signs such as gestures, facial expressions, or the grain of the voice are interpreted as affecting a person's attitude (the object) (1999, 229-230). Turino explains that:

For many music genres...a common assumption is that musicians really mean and are experiencing what they express through “the grain of the voice” and through physical cues. That is, unlike acting, musical performance in many popular genres is *framed* to be taken literally as emotional expression (*ibid*, 239).

In Dagbani films, songs are meant to function as *dicent-indices*, where audiences relate the sounds of the voice and lilting melodies (*sign*) as indicative of the pain and suffering of the character (*object*). In such instances, professional singers “operate like actors who train themselves to reproduce given emotional cues for the effectiveness of their art” (*ibid*, 239). In other words, Dagbani film singers carefully choose melodies, and subsequently use their vocal style and skill, in order to convince audiences that the character is really crying.

Playback Singers and Technology: Microphones, Crooning, and Auto-tune

Mass media affords a different singer-audience relationship than live performance, where the fiction of intimacy is even more exaggerated than in live performance (Yano 2002, 82). In varying regional contexts, the rise of microphones changed the aesthetic and texture of vocal performance, moving performers towards a more intimate and emotional sound. For example, in the US, microphones revolutionised vocal style in the 1920s: singers no longer had to project their voice, and could sing quietly, softly, and more intimately than before (McCracken 1999, 372). Microphones made vocal wavering and breathiness audible to listeners, bringing the audience “up close” to the performer. This vocal style, termed *crooning*, was read by many as “intensely emotional music” (*ibid*). Musicologist Nick Prior (2018, 2) also notes how microphones supported songs of loss:

microphones accompanied a new familiarity between listeners and singers that mediated the intimate sensibilities of love and loss characteristic of modern popular music. Singers learned to adjust themselves to the microphone, their posture and vocal technique bending to its presence.

During the mid-twentieth century, similar crooning vocal styles emerged with the rise of the microphone in other parts of the world. Egyptian singer ‘Abd al-Halim, known as the “King of Arab Music” in the 1950s and 1960s, also crafted his performance on the microphone to produce sentimentality in his voice (Stokes 2009, 65). In India, Kundal Lal Saigal, a renowned Hindi film actor-singer of the 1930s and 1940s, ushered

in an influential vocal technique in Hindi films, famed for crooning into the microphone rather than singing in a full voice (Beaster-Jones 2014, 32). Saigal's recorded voice inspired many first-generation professional playback singers to sing in a similar style (*ibid*). By the 1950s, the Hindi film industry had developed a distinct crooning vocal style suited to the microphone, distinct from the full-throated, open, loud, and lower pitched vocal style of traditional folk and devotional traditions (*ibid*, 56; Arnold 1991, 144; Qureshi 1992, 117).

In the early 1990s, Lanico boomboxes from Taiwan arrived in Tamale, with microphones and double cassette recording technologies.³¹⁶ Early Dagbani film songs were recorded on these boomboxes, layering several vocal tracks together with keyboard instrumental backing also recorded via microphone. The first person to layer multiple vocal and instrumental tracks was Ahmed Adam in his song “Ayizang Amang Zaa N-ti Kpenglana Naawuni” (If You Give All of Yourself to Allah). To recreate the sound of the original Hindi film song (“Awara Pagal Diwara”), Adam first recorded backing tracks played on a keyboard, using the microphone on his boom box. He subsequently played this recorded instrumental track on one cassette while layering a live recording of his vocals onto the second cassette.³¹⁷ In conversations with another film musician in town, she also recalled superimposing several recordings of the same melody line in her early work, singing the same melody at several different octave pitches to make the “voice shake”.³¹⁸ Because of the nature of live recordings, these tracks picked up additional live spectral sounds from the room or surrounding area. Similarly in mid-1920s America, room ambience in recordings became associated with romance and depth, in contrast to recordings using single plane aesthetics, which were considered realist, dry, and depthless (Doyle 2005, 64-93). Such noise is often associated with a sense of “breathiness” of the performer as well, further establishing closeness between performer and listener (Dibben 2014, 121). These early Dagbani film cassettes similarly manipulated spectral and ambient sounds to create a sense of breathiness and intimacy within the song. The cassettes were distributed widely in Tamale, ushering in an entirely new and distinct film song sound in Tamale, that was sensitive to the aesthetic preferences of local audiences.

³¹⁶ Similarly in neighbouring Northern Ivory Coast, by the 1990s double head boom box recorders were widespread, and the double tape decks allowed people to both dub foreign recordings and mix multiple tracks with the accompanying microphone (Launay 1997, 445).

³¹⁷ Conversation with playback singer A on 16 November 2016.

³¹⁸ Interview with playback singer B on 9 of July, 2016. Likewise, singers in the US developed a crooning style through double tracking in the late 1950s, using two recordings of the same vocal line and superimposing the second onto the first with a slight delay to give the vocals “more density” (Millard 1995, 293).

In more recent Dagbani film recordings, auto-tune is commonly applied to vocals in the studio. With origins in the vocoder, auto-tune was originally a voice disguise technology developed for the German military (Prior 2009; Dickinson 2001). As a recording studio technology, auto-tune emerged in 1997, used to alter vocal pitches and timbre of the voice in the studio (Clayton 2016, 26; Ramzy 2016, 449-450). Though originally intended to correct vocal mistakes, the tool was quickly manipulated in creative ways, and in the following year, Cher's "Believe" offered the first example of a creative, non-corrective application of auto-tune in popular music (Clayton 2016, 26-28). When writing about the use of auto-tune in recording studios in Morocco, Jace Clayton describes a complex interplay between singer, software, and song that moves beyond the corrective novelty of auto-tune: recordists in North Africa engage with auto-tune's ability to stretch, alter, and enrich a performer's melismatic vocal performances, adding depth to vocal warbles and enriching throaty glissandi (*ibid*, 45-46). Likewise, Stefan Fiol notes how auto-tune is employed in the post-production stage at Delhi recording studios to produce particular timbres rather than to correct wrong notes (2013, 193). In Tamale, sound engineers employ a particular kind of "Indian auto-tune" as well as other reverb tools to further emphasise the quality and vocal approach of playback singers. For example, during the recording session for *N'Zim*, the sound engineer applied auto-tune to the playback singer's vocal track, stretching and amplifying the vibrato in her voice. As you can hear at the beginning of Audio-Visual Example 17, auto-tune does not erase the singer's wavering vocal approach, but instead plays with these shifting notes in interesting ways, extending and amplifying the shakiness of her voice.

The Future of Dagbani Film Songs

When I left Tamale in November 2016, *N'Zim* was still in the final stages of editing and yet to be released. Exactly a year later in November 2017, I returned to Tamale, and went to the film director's shop to catch up. He had saved a copy of *N'Zim* for me, a token for being an extra in the scene for "Nduma nyeni ka n suhi".³¹⁹ When I asked him how the film was received, he explained that the film had not done as well as he hoped, as he wasn't able to make up the cost of financing the film. He wondered if

³¹⁹ In the final section of the song, I am a passenger in a motor king that Aisha boards to go back to the village when she can no longer walk on her broken sandal. Motor kings are a large motorbike with a trailer attached on the back, meant to transport goats and other livestock but also used as a cheap mode of transportation for Tamale's urban poor. Her mode of transportation, as well as her broken sandal, symbolise her hampered mobility in the city.

marketing had failed him, but also mused that maybe “family movies” are not as popular as they once were.

A few weeks after our conversation, I was invited to take part in *ZimSim*, the film for which I recorded a song in the studio, mentioned earlier in this chapter. This film is part of an immensely popular series, and draws on melodramatic features similar to *N’Zim* and other older films, but with a twist: rather than the village being depicted as the site of tradition and family unity, *ZimSim* depicts the village as a space of backwardness, where non-believers can be saved from poverty and health issues through the adoption of Islam. Urban Muslims attempt to save villagers in a world where rural poor are far less noble. The shift seems to have developed following the rise in trips to Mecca in 2016 after a new airline began offering frequent, direct flights from Tamale near the end of the month of Ramadan for Hajj. Trips to Mecca marked many actors’ and video makers’ first travels abroad, and their experiences in Saudi Arabia are reflected in the imagery and plotlines of new films. Filmmakers capitalised on the availability of new foreign props, such as fancy SUVs, new mobile phones, and jewellery and clothes brought back from Saudi Arabia.

Initially, I was invited by the film director (whom I had known for several years) to go “on location” to film several scenes for *ZimSim* in January 2018. These scenes took place in “the village”, and the entire crew, including myself, travelled for over an hour beyond Tamale to film the rural portions of the film.³²⁰ Once on set, I was given my costume, and was told that I would be an Arab doctor from the city on a humanitarian trip near the village. In the scene, I am travelling with my husband back to the city in a white SUV along a rural road when I see a boy being carried to a funeral burial site. We stop, and I jump out of the car with a stethoscope to check if he is truly dead. I find he is still breathing, and take him in the SUV to the city for treatment in the hospital. Here, redemption from desperation is found in the city: unlike Aisha’s travels back to the village in *N’Zim* by foot and bus, the child travels away from a traditional funeral burial to the safety of an urban hospital in a foreign fancy car.³²¹

³²⁰ In contrast, urban scenes I participated in took place in a house in the city.

³²¹ A similar shift in the rural-urban dichotomy can be read in other kinds of new wave cinema, such as in Iran, where filmmakers have “defamiliarized [the] dreamlike and imaginary picture of village dwelling, demolishing it in the minds of Iranian spectators and replacing it with a more gritty and real image of peasant-hood” (Jāhid 2017, 73). Likewise in recent Nigerian films, directors create a periphery/centre dichotomy with the implication that the city is central, while asserting a perceived simplicity of rural people (Okome 2003, 73).



Figure 43 On location in “the village” filming for *ZimSim* in January 2018.

Later that month while I was visiting the director of *ZimSim* in his home, he showed me his newly recorded song “Nagumsi” for the film, that is based on the melody from the 2016 Hindi film song “Sanam Ree”. In the original film context, the song was meant to be sung by an urban Muslim man to a dying village princess named Nagumsi. The lyrics, first listed in Dagbani and then in English, are as follows:

Bi kul doɣ bia Bahana duniya ɗi
 Ka o bi too yiysi zaani kalu
 Di lahi be behagu ni, ma wumiya bo?
 Ka bi doya so ko yuui n-ti yayi

To nawuni tumdila o tuma o ni borili sham
 To mali tahama ka ɗun beri n kpiraa
 Nyeveli bela n'duma nuuni
 Adam bia ka nuu din ni

Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 To baɗmi ni a kpaɗbu be yomaye
 Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 To baɗmini a kpaɗbu be yomaye
 Karim ma, Suhum be
 To nawuni yali ti Qurani puuni ye
 Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 To baɗmi ni a kpaɗbu be yomaye

DoroDo daa Ghaai bia yuli booni Mayinatu
 To din nyaanga o daa ti kpaɗmi yee

Bi kul doɣ bia Bahana duniya ɗi
 Ka o bi too yiysi zaani kalu
 Di lahi be behagu ni, ma wumiya bo?
 Ka bi doya so ko yuui n-ti yayi

To nawuni tumdila o tuma o ni borili sham
 To mali tahama ka ɗun beri n kpiraa
 Nyeveli bela n'duma nuuni
 Adam bia ka nuu din ni

Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 To baɗmi ni a kpaɗbu be yomaye
 Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 To baɗmini a kpaɗbu be yomaye
 Karim ma, Suhum be
 To nawuni yali ti Qurani puuni ye
 Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 To baɗmi ni a kpaɗbu be yomaye

DoroDo daa Ghaai bia yuli booni Mayinatu
 To din nyaanga o daa ti kpaɗmi yee

They gave birth to a child into the world
 He couldn't stand up and fell down
 It's also part of life, I hope you've heard
 Then they give birth to someone, and he lived very long

So God does what he desires
 So have hope that the sickly won't die
 Life is in the hands of God
 Adam's children have no hand in it

Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 Your recovering is just near
 Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 Your recovering is just near
 Read, supplicate,
 God tells us in the Qur'an that
 Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 Your recovering is just near

Sickness got hold of a child called Mayinatu
 Then she recovered from it

They gave birth to a child into the world
 He couldn't stand up and fell down
 It's also part of life, I hope you've heard
 Then they give birth to someone, and he lived very long

So God does what he desires
 So have hope that the sickly won't die
 Life is in the hands of God
 Adam's children have no hand in it

Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 Your recovering is just near
 Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 Your recovering is just near
 Read, supplicate,
 God tells us in the Qur'an that
 Nagumsi, Nagumsi,
 Your recovering is just near

Sickness got hold of a child called Mayinatu
 Then she recovered from it

Like most Dagbani film songs, God's unpredictability remains central in the lyrics of "Nagumsi". However, unlike "Nduma nyeni ka n suhira" where Aisha speaks to God directly in a plea to find security and safety, the lyrics for "Nagumsi" encourage the princess to read the Qur'an in order to be saved from her illness. While Aisha runs away from the city to her mother in the village, the princess is saved by the song of a visiting urban Muslim man. In *ZimSim*, the melodramatic moral universe is de-centred from traditional village life, and re-centred in urban life, technology, and conversion to Islam.

Originally, the song scene for "Nagumsi" was as follows: the main character (an urban Muslim man) was passing through the village, and upon encountering the dying princess, he sings his song, which ultimately saves her life. As I was interested in the music, the filmmaker offered me the chance to record my own version of the song in studio just for fun, so that I could learn about the process first hand and bring home a copy to show friends and family. He showed me his initial version of "Nagumsi" and told me to memorise the song in its entirety. Several weeks later, I was invited to the studio, where I had the chance to record the song. Following my studio recording, the filmmaker changed his mind and worked to include my recorded version in the scene, making small adjustments to the script to do so. Several days before I left Tamale, he asked if I would lip sync "Nagumsi" for the film, and I agreed. On the day of filming, I learned that I would have a speaking role to introduce the song, too. Because there was no script, I was instructed on what to say by the filmmaker and sound engineer.

Initially, I was an Arab doctor who "knew of an Indian song that could save the dying princess". In the scene, I would sing the song while recording it on my phone, and subsequently send that file to the urban man in the village via text message, who is close to the dying princess. Upon hearing my recording, he begins to sing the song to the princess, in order to save her life. However, during the filming of the scene, there was a heated debate amongst the film crew about me having an "Indian song" that could save the princess. The cameraman and another actor suggested that the song be a "song from the scriptures", implying the princess would be saved through listening to Qur'anic verses. Unlike in Chapter Six, where religious scholars noted the similarities between Hindi songs and a broader Islamic soundworld, there was a clear need to differentiate between Indian music and the religious context of the scene. In the final version of the song scene, I sing a "song from the scriptures" that I send to the urban

man on his mobile phone. After he hears my recording, he begins to sing the redemptive “Nagumsi” song to the princess who, after hearing the following lyrics, stands up, recovering from her ailment.

The quick shift away from an Indian song that would save the princess to a religious song was uncomfortable for me: as a foreigner, this is a weighty scene to take part in, precisely because it deals with religious conversion. However, as the decision to make “Nagumsi” a “song from the scripture” happened during filming, I was unable to fully consent to the extent or impact of my role, and only truly understood the context of the scene after it was fully edited and included in the final film release, which was sent to me in London several months later. As discussed in the positionality and informed consent portion of Chapter Two, informed consent is at the heart of ethical research. Researchers are not always afforded informed consent when they take part in performances or events, and this is one of the complications of participant observation as a research method.

Shifts in film content, from the village as the centre of the moral universe to a place of backwardness, reveals major social changes in Northern Ghana. Dagbani film songs reflect these social shifts, illuminating the experiences of many of Tamale’s contemporary urban youth, who are born into devout Muslim families in the city. In this environment, the village is more of an imagined elsewhere than lived experience. With Tamale’s increasing urban sprawl and an increase in new build constructions, urban youth are now dreaming of developing lavish two-storey homes in the countryside. These dreams are reflected in the themes and perspectives of Dagbani films and their soundtracks. In other words, foreign film adaptations and influences are not static. Rather, the ways in which Hindi films are adapted and the particular aspects included in local filmmaking will change over time, along with social, political, and economic changes in the region (such as the rise of the internet). As such, these adapted Hindi film songs stand to reflect new social histories in Tamale, for youth whose experiences differ greatly from the postcolonial experiences of their parents and grandparents.

Conclusion

Nearly twenty-five years after the decline of cinema halls in Northern Ghana and the arrival of video recording equipment, Dagbani films have largely replaced Hindi films

in video centres and homes throughout Tamale, as youth watch and respond to the crises of their urban experience in their own language. Dagbani films offer a productive space to explore larger social, political, and economic experiences in Dagbon from the 1990s to present, and feature a wealth of diegetic film songs about the unpredictability of God in times of economic uncertainty and social upheaval. The study of foreign film adaptation in Tamale tells us a great deal about the tastes of filmmakers and their perceived audiences. Filmmakers draw from popular postcolonial and some newer Hindi film songs circulating in the city, changing slower Hindi film song melodies about romantic longing and lost love to the loss of God's presence, expressing the particular economic and social uncertainties of life in a West African secondary city. The role of the playback singer developed out of a need for someone who could sonically articulate a character's uncertainty and struggle, using vocal techniques, such as breathiness, vibrato, and rhythmic delay to resemble tears and desperation. Dagbani city melodramas employ song-segments to engage viewers in issues of their specific urban experience, including the separation of families, the rise of Islam, travels South for labour, and the continued lack of education and further unemployment for Northern youth.

As mentioned early on in the thesis, Africanist film scholar Olivier Barlet (2010, 142) argued that there is a "divorce" between Bollywood and Africa, due to a loss in interest in the films in recent years. On the surface, Barlet's claims resonate with the perspectives of Northern Ghanaian youth: the majority of my interviews with children in 2016 showed a decline in popularity of Hindi films, and an increase of viewership in the budding Dagbani film industry, to the extent that many children do not recognise the Hindi film song melodies as being from Hindi films.³²² As I have shown, Hindi films remain present in the city, however adapted into local filmmaking. The melodramatic mode and musical format of Hindi films continues to resonate with Dagbani youth, though continually altered to fit within ever-changing culturally relevant codes, reflecting themes pertinent to community life, religion, morality, and family values in the urban environment. In the next and final chapter, I reflect back upon the many ways that Hindi film songs have been adapted and used in a range of contexts in everyday life in Tamale over time. I argue that these melodies work to reflect and refract the many histories of social life and popular culture in the city.

³²² For example, one child staying in the house where I lived asked me "why are the Indian actors singing our songs?"

Chapter Eight: Conclusions

In this thesis, Hindi film song melodies work as a thread, woven between and travelling through various social histories in a postcolonial West African city. By following the many circulations and adaptations of Hindi film songs in Tamale, we learn about the everyday musical experiences of women and children in the domestic sphere, of Islamic school teachers and students, and of actors, filmmakers, and popular musicians who create new media for their young, urban audiences. As I have shown in each chapter, the social histories of Tamale residents are fluid – individuals ebb and flow between the boundaries of domestic life, educational life, and religious life, and also across time, as is reflected in such varied generational experiences of social life in the city. In this light, the study of Hindi film songs in Tamale is not only a study of foreign music's circulation in a post-colonial city, but also a study of many individuals whose lives intersect in meaningful ways through the music they share (Niranjana 2018, 261). How these songs are used, adapted, and experienced reflect and refract new social histories that are often left out of traditional archives and scholarly discourse.

I have argued that musical circulation is a productive lens through which to study many urban social histories at once. Given their plasticity and flexibility and their continual use over time, Hindi film songs move in unexpected directions and into different social spheres. Their movement provides new pathways in which to study Tamale's postcolonial social histories, including both public and intimate histories, and histories that work across multiple generations, faiths, genders, and social strata. Melodies ebb and flow between mediated/inscribed and embodied/incorporated forms over time, decomposing and recomposing in ways that are indicative of broader social movements and experiences (Born 2005, 26). The unpredictable path that these melodies take makes for interesting juxtapositions and contrasts: film songs once beloved for their championing of the rural poor by mid-twentieth century viewers can be adapted nearly seventy years later in a Dagbani film song that extols the backwardness of the village and the sanctity and civility of the city. Listening closely to the many adaptations of Hindi film songs over time provides new insights into broader social change and experience that otherwise remain undercurrents, beneath the surface of day to day life.

Hindi film songs are a particularly fruitful source for historical inquiry given that they lead a double life as a mediated and participatory form in Tamale: these songs

have circulated through cinema halls, video centres, and on personal television sets, via radios, gramophones, cassettes, and on mobile phones. They were also sung by street performers outside the cinema halls, as lullabies and accompaniment for domestic labourers, and as religious praise songs in Islamic schools. The study of Hindi film songs in the urban environment thus reveals the depth of musical experience for the individual urban dweller: a young girl at the Islamic school might recognise a song from her favourite Dagbani film; a Dagbani film star might draw on the Hindi film songs his mother and aunt sang to him; Hip hop artists might avoid Hindi film song melodies in their music to differentiate themselves from what they perceive to be “village music”. In other words, following Hindi film songs as they move across space and time reveals insights on faith, gender, urbanisation, and intergenerational change in Tamale. Rather than a frivolity or novelty, experiences and memories of Hindi film music in Tamale are interconnected with experiences of everyday life. They connect disparate experiences, revealing a constellation of social histories in the process.

A study of Hindi film circulation in Tamale reveals the diverse histories of those who facilitated (and at times limited) their circulation. They include Lebanese, Syrian, and Sindhi business owners, Dagbamba urban dwellers, colonial administrators, and postcolonial urban planners, whose lives coalesced in the city. Adaptations of Hindi film songs performed in and around the cinema hall in Tamale comment on the arrival of varied merchants, politicians, and businessmen in colonial and postcolonial Tamale. For example, Albela, who set Dagbani and Hausa lyrics to Hindi film songs, sang songs about the plight of Northerners in the postcolonial period, advocating for Northerners to collectivise across regions and borders, as is evidenced in songs such as “Taanga Ni Bayanga”. The arrival of and adaptation of Hindi film songs extends broader, public social histories of the late colonial and early post-colonial period. Such use of popular music and media as historical frame is significant considering the dearth of literature on postcolonial social history, and the methodological barriers to postcolonial research outlined in Chapter Three.

Apart from broader public histories, the circulation of Hindi film songs in Tamale also works to illuminate the intricacies of everyday life, detailing histories of dwelling, domestication, and family life that are often left out of broader public histories (Clifford 1997; Thompson 1979). Women adapted Hindi film songs heard from their gramophones and radios into everyday musical practices, that were used to accompany daily chores and to lull children to sleep, establishing an indexical

relationship between Hindi film songs and domestic life for a new generation of youth in the 1980s and 1990s. In exploring this history, I have made clear the interconnectivity of gender, labour, leisure, and musical experience in the city. For example, given the restrictions of married women in attending cinema shows, as well as their daily chores and tasks in the home (including cleaning, cooking, and childcare), the gramophone became central to the lives of married women in post-colonial Tamale. Major radio broadcasters were so attuned to this at the time that they aired Hindi film songs during women's hour shows for Dagbamba and Hausa housewives. Women's media engagement reflected their daily lives, wherein they experienced Hindi films in relation to listening practices rather than viewing, garnering a better familiarity with the songs over time. A study of Hindi film song circulation in Tamale reveals histories of gender, media, and music in the postcolonial environment, where Dagbamba gender roles shaped experiences of Hindi film song just as film music shaped musical practices in the home.

This thesis further contributes to the study of musical experience across generations. I have argued that an exploration of Hindi film song's history in Tamale must take into account the temporal as well as the spatial elements of its circulation. Throughout, I have detailed how Hindi film songs are experienced, received, and adapted by individuals throughout time, drawing upon Turino's ideas of cultural cohorts and formations, as well as semantic snowballing to detail the many new associational meanings of Hindi film song melodies in present-day Tamale (2000; 2008). In Chapters Two and Four, I show how Hindi film songs became a part of urban youth culture in 1960s and 1970s Tamale, where youth differentiated themselves from older generations through establishing their own urban cultural cohort, centred around leisure activities including the cinema. In later years, the cohort dissolved into a cultural formation, as Hindi film songs became a part of everyday life in the domestic sphere. Therein, I show how these postcolonial youth incorporated Hindi film songs in domestic life as work songs and lullabies. When those children became parents in the 1980s and 1990s, they passed these melodies down to their children, commencing a cycle of intergenerational exchange of Hindi film songs in the domestic sphere. As women began to listen to and memorise Hindi film songs in place of their own Dagbani lullabies or work songs in the home, these film song melodies were experienced by younger generations as intimately connected to the everyday labour of their mothers and guardians, to the extent that these songs are now referred to as "women's music" and "village music" by younger generations.

As well as in the domestic sphere, Hindi film song circulation yields new social histories of religion and religious education in the city. The movement of Hindi film songs into Tamale's Islamic schools provokes a new history of the *mawlid* in Ghana, a musically diverse and wide-reaching practice that has yet to be studied in depth. The influence of Hindi film songs in Tamale's Tijaniyya Islamic schools during the post-colonial period reveals not only the history of a kind of foreign mediated music within Islamic education there, but further reflects the changing place of religion in Tamale at that time, following the rise of the Ahlus-Sunnah community in Tamale. This historical change is significant to the study of music in everyday life, as it commenced new debates around the acceptability and role of music in Muslim life in the city.

Lastly, Hindi film songs are intimately linked to the history of Dagbani films, a locally produced popular music and film scene in Tamale that emerged in the 1990s. Throughout, I show how the rise of "new/small" media, including video cameras and keyboards, made it possible to make one's own media, reflecting their own histories and experiences of life in Tamale through video and song. That the format and structure of Hindi films was drawn upon for early filmmaking in the region reflects the popularity of its melodramatic form and its use of songs to tell stories, a format already popular in the region thanks to urban travelling theatres there. Dagbani film songs continually reflect emerging urban experiences in the city, revealing youth's changing views on religious and urban life in Tamale. The use of Hindi film songs as "sorrowful songs", commonly found in Dagbani social films, reveals the extent to which Hindi film songs are used as tools for exploring major tensions in urban life in Tamale, such as between rural and urban life, and between the rich and the poor.

Drawing on media anthropology and active audience research, I have engaged with "everyday" individuals regardless of their musical experience or status, exploring people's relationships to music through both mediated and non-mediated means in their daily lives. I have found value in speaking with musicians as well as so called non-musicians, who are also involved in writing, performing, and taking part in musical practices in their day to day lives. By taking seriously the experiences of music in everyday life, I have encountered a range of participatory musical genres, among them lullabies, work songs, and praise songs. This approach has made clear how everyday musical experience is dependent on social context, where something as routine as

mopping the floor while listening to a Hindi film song DVD is actually connected to a much more extended history of gendered practices of listening in the domestic sphere.

By applying the perspectives and frames of media anthropology and active audience studies to the study of music, I have illuminated the fluidity and interconnectedness of mediated and non-mediated musical experience in daily life. I have shown how a foreign film song can be incorporated into living performative practices (such as lullabies or praise songs) only to be mediated again in later years by Dagbani playback singers working in the film industry. The fluid nature of these melodies as they move in and out of mediated forms makes clear the intimate relationship between mediated and non-mediated music in the study of music circulation. By showing the many ways in which foreign mediated songs have been addressed, taken up, and adapted by listeners, I challenge distinctions between performer and audience, and between “original” and “copy”. In future research, many of the methods and approaches born out of active audience research and media anthropology may be useful to ethnomusicological research, given the ubiquity of media and technology in everyday musical life.

As I have shown in each chapter, tracing the “source” of melodies embedded within living performance practices becomes increasingly difficult. When film melodies are adapted into new musical contexts, their sense of melodic “origin” is destabilised, commencing a process of what Turino terms semantic snowballing. For subsequent generations, these melodies might be heard as originating from their Tijani religious scholars, from their mothers and guardians, or from popular Dagbani songs, highlighting the unstable nature of musical meaning and musical ownership, where music is polysemic, indexical, and context-dependent. Karin Barber (2018, 13) has written that after the performance is over, any sense of its belonging to the performer is suspended; music or dance enters into a state of perpetual potential, so that new adaptations stand to “complete” the work in different ways, in relation to the generational, religious, social, gendered, and class orientation of the performer. In each chapter, I have followed the many ways that Hindi film songs have been “completed”, revealing a multiplicity of social histories in the process.

This project has used a mixed-method approach. I have embraced the messiness of historical inquiry, while also engaging with diverse interdisciplinary perspectives, an approach that has yielded rich ethnographic and archival examples. To begin, I argued

that given the varying social histories I embarked upon in my research, I would rely on a range of sources, among them archival (including official archives, sound archives, newspaper archives, map collections, and photo collections) as well as ethnographic methods (interviews, conversations, and participant observation). Such a broad ranging approach provides a kind of insight into the histories of Hindi film songs in Tamale that would have been otherwise impossible. Each method garnered different kinds of information, that in combination supported these varied histories. The study of creative performance in the post-colonial city necessitates this breadth, given the messiness of post-colonial archives, and the often hidden histories of daily life.

Future Research

This thesis offers a new history of Hindi film song circulation abroad in the mid-twentieth century, being the first full-length study of Hindi film's history in Ghana. More research could be done in this realm, considering the far-reaching impact of Hindi films across Africa. As Brian Larkin (1997, 434) outlined in his work on Hindi films in Northern Nigeria:

The task that remains is to theorise adequately the complexity and heterogeneity of contemporary national and transnational cultural flows. Why are Indian films more popular in northern than in southern Nigeria? Are the reasons for their popularity the same elsewhere in West Africa?

Eisenberg (2017, 337) echoes this sentiment, writing that “each example of Bollywood *contrafacta* on the African continent has a unique sound and represents a unique engagement with the source material.” While scholarly work on the influence of Hindi films in Africa is limited, I have found throughout my research a range of instances of Indian cinema's influence in the region: tourists of Indian origin in the Gambia have described being praised as celebrities by local Hindi film fans, while Burkinabe taxi drivers have spoken fondly of their “India Day” celebrations in Ouagadougou every April. From these anecdotes and many others, it is clear that the influence of Indian cinema in Africa extends beyond what is available in scholarship to date. Each new study of Hindi film's reception and influence in West Africa will depend on complex and varied colonial and postcolonial economic, political, religious, and social histories.

Though my focus has been on the circulation and adaptation of Hindi film songs in the domestic sphere, in the Islamic school *mawlid*, and in the Dagbani film industry, there has yet to be direct, in-depth research on any of these musical and mediated phenomena. In what follows, I briefly detail some of the questions that might be raised and explored in future research projects. Chapter Five offers initial insights into the value of research on mediated music in the domestic sphere, including the study of women's work songs, as well as the study of child-directed songs in Ghana following the rise of mediated music in the region. There is room for further research on music within the realm of media anthropology in Ghana and elsewhere, especially in the domestic sphere, where the rise of mobile phone technologies is fundamentally changing the shape of everyday music-making in the home. Chapter Six has offered preliminary insights into the study of the *mawlid*, Sufi popular music, and the role of music in Islamic education in Ghana. Beyond Michael Frishkopf's (2016) recent chapter, very little work has considered the relationship between Islam and music in Ghana. There is also a great deal of research yet to be done on the study of the *mawlid* in its musical context in Ghana and in West Africa more broadly, not only in terms of the Islamic school *mawlid*, but also in the various kinds of *mawlid* events taking place in Ghana and across the subcontinent. Such studies will offer further depth and insight into the syncretic nature of music and religion in the region. Lastly, the study of West African videos has been largely explored by film scholars and media anthropologists. Ethnomusicological perspectives would afford new insights into the interconnectivity of music and media in contemporary West African film and video productions. This is particularly pertinent considering the importance of music production in many film and video industries across the subcontinent, as is already evidenced in the cases of Kano and Tamale.

Conclusion

This thesis charts an unwritten history of Hindi film songs in Northern Ghana. It is original both in its subject matter, being the first study of Hindi films song reception and adaptation in Ghana, as well as in approach, using foreign film music as an entry point into the study of everyday urban social histories. Throughout, I have drawn on an innovative mixed-method approach, blending intensive archival research with extensive ethnographic work. I have made clear the value of audience studies and media anthropology as important vantage points for exploring music's circulation in the city, as it moves between mediated and non-mediated forms, and across musicians

and non-musicians alike, who engage in participatory musical practices in their daily lives. My work has engaged with a variety of communities, seeking to explore the synergies and differences between film song reception and adaptation in multiple contexts within the city. By following the movement of Hindi film songs across their various circulations, informants have described the many purposes these songs serve. Given music's flexibility, fluidity, and ability to change over time, foreign circulating music proves a useful tool in illuminating broader social change, including the changing shape of family and gender in the home, the diversification of Islamic beliefs in Tamale, and the changing generational experiences of media and music in the city. Taking seriously audience experiences and engagements with Hindi film songs, and their subsequent adaptations and performances of these songs, reveals new social histories of everyday musical life in Northern Ghana.

Appendix A

Arabic Language Films Screened by the Ghana Censorship Board 1955-1957 Information sourced from “Board of Control for Censorship of Cinematography Films, 1955-1957.” PRAAD-Accra, RG3/5/62.	
Date	Film Title and Year Made if Known
28 February 1956	<i>El Zolm Haram</i>
8 March 1956	<i>Afritet Ismail Yassin</i>
17 May 1956	<i>Bint El Balad</i>
23 August 1956	<i>Hoor-E-Arab</i>

Hindi Films Screened by the Ghana Censorship Board 1955-1957 Information sourced from “Board of Control for Censorship of Cinematography Films, 1955-1957.” PRAAD-Accra, RG3/5/62.	
Date	Film Title and Year Made (if known)
25 th October 1955	<i>Teen Sadar</i>
13 th December 1955	<i>Sagia</i>
29 th December 1956	<i>Pyar Dushman</i>
22 February 1956	<i>Oonchi Haveli (1955)</i>
22 March 1956	<i>Gazab</i>
26 April 1956	<i>Char Char</i>
28 May 1956	<i>Bhole Piya</i>
5 June 1956	<i>Badshah (1954)</i>
29 June 1956	<i>Bandish (1955)</i>
4 July 1956	<i>La Chak</i>
20 July 1956	<i>Jungle Man</i>
10 August 1956	<i>Shahi Chor (1955)</i>
11 September 1956	<i>Sitara</i>
19 October 1956	<i>Aar Paar (1954)</i>
21 November 1956	<i>Bhagam Bhag (1956)</i>
26 November 1956	<i>Rifiti</i>
20 December 1956	<i>Sheik Chilli</i>
27 December 1956	<i>Motor Wali</i> (passed but concerns about worn down quality of film)
4 February 1957	<i>Chabuk Wali</i> (passed but concerns about worn down quality of film)
18 March 1957	<i>Tartar Kar Chor</i>

5 April 1957	<i>Adamkor</i>
1 July 1957	<i>Khulje Sin Sin</i>

Appendix B

A list of Egyptian film titles followed by a list of Hindi Film Song Titles listed in Ghana's Major newspaper cinema listings (*Daily Graphic*, the *Liberator*, *Spectator Daily*, the *Ashanti Pioneer*, and the *Ghanaian Times*). All listings sourced are between 1951 to 1969, and appear in alphabetical order. The list is only a partial list of the Hindi films screened in Ghana during this period, as many Ghanaian cinemas did not advertise through newspapers.

Arabic Language Film Titles Listed as Playing in Ghana's Cinema Halls, 1951-1969

1. *Al Fares Al Assouad* (no date found)
2. *Amiret El-Guezirat* (no date found)
3. *Awel Ghurum* (no date found)
4. *Bein El Hawa* (no date found)
5. *Bint El Balad* (1955)
6. *El Eich Wal Malh* (1950)
7. *El Sayed Ahmed El Badawi* (no date found)
8. *Fettouh El Islam* (no date found)
9. *Ibn Antar* (no date found)
10. *Ismail Yassine in the Army* (1955)
11. *Lastu Malakan* (1947)
12. *Leilet El Henna* (no date found)
13. *Raksat Elwadaa* (no date found)
14. *Sabah El Kheir* (1947)
15. *Samra Sina* (1959)
16. *Takiyei El Ekhfa* (no date found)
17. *Warda Shah* (no date found)

Hindi Film Titles Listed as Playing in Ghana's Cinema Halls, 1951-1969

1. *24 Ghante* (1958)
2. *40 Days* (1959)
3. *Aakasparl* (no date found)
4. *Aan* (1952)
5. *Aar Paar* (1954)
6. *Abe Hayat* (1955)
7. *Adam Khor* (1955)
8. *Adventures of Hajji Baba* (1954)
9. *Aflatoon* (1950)
10. *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp* (1952)
11. *Albela* (1951)
12. *Ali Ashore* (no date found)
13. *Alibaba Aur 40 Chor* (1954)
14. *Alladin Ka Beta* (1955)
15. *Alladin Ka Chirag* (1957)
16. *Amar Singh Rahore* (1957)

17. *Amber* (1952)
18. *Ameer* (1954)
19. *Amrit Manthan* (1961)
20. *Anarkali* (1953)
21. *Andaz* (1949)
22. *Apna Aur Preet Parai* (1960)
23. *Apradhi Kaun?* (1957)
24. *Arab Ka Lal* (1964)
25. *Arab Ka Saudagar* (1956)
26. *Arab Ka Sitara* (1961)
27. *Arab Ka Saudagar* (1956)
28. *Arasala Piranthavan* (1958)
29. *Aurat* (1953)
30. *Awara* (1951)
31. *Awara Shahzadi* (1956)
32. *Ayodhyapati* (1956)
33. *Baarat* (1960)
34. *Baarish* (1957)
35. *Baaz Bahadur* (1960)
36. *Baazigar* (1956)
37. *Bad Shah* (1954)
38. *Bada Bahi* (1957)
39. *Badal* (1951)
40. *Badshah Salamat* (1956)
41. *Bhagam Bhag* (1956)
42. *Baghdad Ka Chor* (1946)
43. *Bagdad Thirudan* (1960)
44. *Baghdad Ka Jadu* (1956)
45. *Baghi Sardar* (1956)
46. *Bahadur Lutera* (1960)
47. *Bahar* (1951)
48. *Bahut Din Hue* (1954)
49. *Bajrang Bali* (1956)
50. *Bandish* (1955)
51. *Bajrang Bali* (1956)
52. *Bara-Dari* (1955)
53. *Baradari* (1955)
54. *Basant Bahar* (1956)
55. *Baazigar* (1959)
56. *Begunah* (1957)
57. *Beqasoor* (1950)
58. *Bewafa* (1952)
59. *Bhagam Bhag* (1956)
60. *Bhai-Bhai* (1956)
61. *Bhaktaraj* (1943)
62. *Bhala Aadmi* (1958)
63. *Bhola Shikar* (1958)
64. *Bhole Piya* (1949)
65. *Bigre Dil* (1949)
66. *Bijli* (1950)
67. *Black Arrow* (1965)
68. *Bombay Ka Babu* (1960)
69. *Bus Conductor* (1959)
70. *C.I.D.* (1956)

71. *Captain Kishore* (1957)
72. *Cha Cha Cha* (1964)
73. *Chhabila* (1955)
74. *Chabuk Wali* (1938)
75. *Chai Baaz* (no date found)
76. *Chalta Purza* (1958)
77. *Chalti Ka Naam Gaadi* (1958)
78. *Chham Chhama Chham* (1952)
79. *Chan Dralekha* (1948)
80. *Chandan* (1958)
81. *Chandramukhl* (no date found)
82. *Chandrasena* (1959)
83. *Chandralekha* (1948)
84. *Chandramukhi* (1960)
85. *Char Chand* (1953)
86. *Char Paise* (1955)
87. *Charas* (1956)
88. *Chetak* (1960)
89. *Chhabila* (1955)
90. *Chalta Purza* (1933)
91. *Chini Jadugar* (1959)
92. *Chirag Kahan Roshni Kahan* (1959)
93. *Chirag-E-Chin* (1955)
94. *Chor Sipahie* (no date found)
95. *Chora-Chori* (1954)
96. *Chori Chori* (1956)
97. *Choron Ki Baraat* (1960)
98. *Chhota Baai* (1966)
99. *Circus King* (1946)
100. *Commander* (1959)
101. *Daaka* (1959)
102. *Daku Bhupat* (1960)
103. *Daku Ki Ladki* (1954)
104. *Daryai Lutera* (1952)
105. *Daughter of Sindbad* (1958)
106. *Dayar-E-Habib* (1956)
107. *Dekha Jayega* (1939)
108. *Dil Deke Dekho* (1959)
109. *Deler Hasina* (1960)
110. *Devta* (no date found)
111. *Dhoom Dhaam* (1949)
112. *Dil Apna Aur Preet Parai* (1960)
113. *Dil Deke Dekho* (1959)
114. *Dil Tera Diwana* (1962)
115. *Diler Hasina* (1960)
116. *Do Aadmi* (1960)
117. *Do Dost* (1960)
118. *Do Roti* (1957)
119. *Doroti* (1957)
120. *Dosti* (1964)
121. *Dr Z* (1959)
122. *Duniya Na Mane* (1937)
123. *Ek Tha Raja* (1951)
124. *Ek-Hi-Rasta* (1939)

125. *Farishta* (1958)
126. *Fifty Fifty* (1956)
127. *Fighting Queen* (1956)
128. *Flying Express* (1949)
129. *Flying Prince* (1947)
130. *Flying Raneer* (1939)
131. *Forty Days* (1959)
132. *Fuji Lama* (1954)
133. *Gateway of India* (1957)
134. *Gazab* (1951)
135. *Gehra Daag* (1963)
136. *Girl Friend* (1960)
137. *Goa* (no date found)
138. *Gul Sanobar* (1953)
139. *Gun Fight* (1960)
140. *Gunehgar* (1967)
141. *Halaku* (1956)
142. *Halaku* (1956)
143. *Halla Gulla* (1954)
144. *Hanuman Patal Vijay* (1951)
145. *Haqdar* (1946)
146. *Har Har Mahadev* (1950)
147. *Hathkadi* (1958)
148. *Hatim Tai* (1956)
149. *Hatimtai Ki Beti* (1955)
150. *Hazar Raten* (1953)
151. *Hero No. 1* (1959)
152. *Hoor-E-Arab* (1955)
153. *Hukum Ka Ekka* (1964)
154. *Husn Banu* (1956)
155. *Husn Ka Chor* (1953)
156. *Insaniyat* (1955)
157. *Jaal Saz* (1969)
158. *Jaalsaz* (1959)
159. *Jadoo* (1951)
160. *Jagga Daku* (1959)
161. *Jahazi Lutera* (1957)
162. *Jai Chitod* (1961)
163. *Jai Singh* (1959)
164. *Jal Pari* (1952)
165. *Jalan* (1948)
166. *Jallad* (1956)
167. *Jalpari* (1952)
168. *Jalwa* (1955)
169. *Janam Janam Ke Phere* (1957)
170. *Jang Bahadur* (1958)
171. *Jhamela* (1953)
172. *Jhanak Jhanak Payal Baahe* (1955)
173. *Jhumroo* (1961)
174. *Joru Ka Bhai* (1955)
175. *Jungle Ka Jadoo* (1955)
176. *Jungle King* (1959)
177. *Jungle Man* (1950)
178. *Jungle Princess* (1942)

179. *Kala Chor* (1956)
180. *Kalpana* (1960)
181. *Kar Bhala* (1956)
182. *Karigar* (1958)
183. *Khul Ja Sim Sim* (1956)
184. *Khush Raho* (1949)
185. *Kismet Ka Khel* (1956)
186. *Koh-I-Noor* (1960)
187. *Laalten* (1956)
188. *Lachak* (1951)
189. *Lal Batti* (1957)
190. *Lal Quila* (1960)
191. *Love in Simla* (1960)
192. *Love in Tokyo* (1966)
193. *Madadgar* (1947)
194. *Madari* (1959)
195. *Madhumati* (1958)
196. *Madhur Milan* (1955)
197. *Magic Carpet* (1964)
198. *Mahadevi* (1957)
199. *Main Hoon Jadugar* (1965)
200. *Mangala* (1950)
201. *Mangu* (1954)
202. *Manohara* (1954, Tamil language film)
203. *Manzil* (1960)
204. *Mara Maru* (1952)
205. *Mast Qalandar* (1955)
206. *Mastana* (1954)
207. *Maya Nagri* (1957)
208. *Mayabazar* (1957)
209. *Mayurpankh* (1954)
210. *Mehlon Ke Khwab* (1960)
211. *Mirza Sahiban* (1957)
212. *Miss Coca Cola* (1955)
213. *Miss Good Night* (1960)
214. *Miss Toofan Mail* (1958)
215. *Mohabbat Ki Jeet* (1943)
216. *Mohar* (1959)
217. *Mohini* (1957)
218. *Mother India* (1957)
219. *Mr. Chakram* (1956)
220. *Mr. Qartoon* (1958)
221. *Mr. X* (1957)
222. *Mumtaz Mahal* (1944)
223. *Musafir Khana* (1955)
224. *Naag Champa* (1958)
225. *Naag Lok* (1957)
226. *Naag Mohini* (1963)
227. *Naag Padmani* (1957)
228. *Naaz* (1954)
229. *Nache Nagin Baje Been* (1960)
230. *Naqab* (1955)
231. *Naqab Posh* (1956)
232. *Naulakha Haar* (1953)

233. *Naya Andaz* (1956)
234. *Naya Kadam* (1958)
235. *Neelam Pari* (1952)
236. *Neelofar* (1957)
237. *Nek Khatoon* (1959)
238. *Nishan* (1949)
239. *Nishan Danka* (1952)
240. *Noor Mahal* (1965)
241. *Onchi Haveli* (1955)
242. *Paataal Bhairavi* (1952)
243. *Pahadi Nagin* (1964)
244. *Paisa Hi Paisa* (1956)
245. *Pakshiraj* (1959)
246. *Pardesi* (1957)
247. *Paristan* (1957)
248. *Pasban* (1957)
249. *Patal Nagri* (1963)
250. *Patanga* (1949)
251. *Pathala Bhairavi* (1951)
252. *Pati Parmeshwar* (1958)
253. *Pawan Putra Hanuman* (1957)
254. *Piya Milan* (1958)
255. *Pocket Maar* (1956)
256. *Princess Saaba* (1958)
257. *Pyaara Dushman* (1955)
258. *Qaidi No. 911* (1959)
259. *Qatil* (1960)
260. *Ragini* (1958)
261. *Raj Hath* (1956)
262. *Raj Rani Meera* (1956)
263. *Raj Ratan* (1953)
264. *Rangeela* (no date found)
265. *Rani Rupmati* (1957)
266. *Ratna Manjari* (1955)
267. *Return of Mr. Superman* (1960)
268. *Rifle Girl* (1958)
269. *Royal Mail* (1963)
270. *Rukhsana* (1955)
271. *Rustom Kaun* (1966)
272. *Sachche Ka Bol Bala* (1958)
273. *Sagaai* (1966)
274. *Sair-E-Paristan* (1958)
275. *Sakhi Hatim* (1955)
276. *Samrat Chandragupt* (1958)
277. *Samrat Prithviraj Chauhan* (1959)
278. *Samsheer* (1953)
279. *Samson* (1964)
280. *Samundar* (1957)
281. *Samundari Daku* (1956)
282. *Saqi* (1952)
283. *Sara Jahan Hamara* (1961)
284. *Sardar* (1955)
285. *Sargam* (1950)
286. *Sarhad* (1960)

287. *Sati Anasuya* (1957, Telugu language film)
288. *Sati Naag Kanya* (1956)
289. *Shabistan* (1951)
290. *Shahi Bazar* (1957)
291. *Shahi Chor* (1955)
292. *Shahi Farman* (1961)
293. *Shamsheer Baaz* (1953)
294. *Sharif Daku* (1960)
295. *Sheikh Chilli* (1942)
296. *Sher Dil* (1965)
297. *Sher-E-Baghdad* (1957)
298. *Shikari* (1963)
299. *Shin Shinaki Boobla Boo* (1952)
300. *Shiv Bhakta* (1955)
301. *Shiv Kanya* (1954)
302. *Shree 420* (1955)
303. *Shri Ganesh Mahima* (1950)
304. *Shuk Rambha* (1953)
305. *Simba* (1955)
306. *Sindbad the Sailor* (1952)
307. *Sipahsalar* (1956)
308. *Sitara* (1955)
309. *Son of Ali Baba* (1952)
310. *Son of Hatimtai* (1965)
311. *Son of India* (1962)
312. *Son of Sinbad* (1958)
313. *Sudarshan Chakra* (1956)
314. *Sujata* (1959)
315. *Taj Aur Talwar* (1956)
316. *Talwar Ka Dhani* (1956)
317. *Tatar Ka Chor* (1955)
318. *Teen Sardar* (1965)
319. *Teerandaz* (1955)
320. *Teesri Manzil* (1966)
321. *Tera Kya Kahna* (1959)
322. *Tilottama* (1954)
323. *Tin Tin Tin* (1959)
324. *To Ustad* (1959)
325. *Toofani Tarzan* (1937)
326. *Tumhari Kasam* (1948)
327. *Tumsa Nahin Dekha* (1957)
328. *Veer Rajputani* (1955)
329. *Watan* (1954)
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